



# Newsletter

Autumn Term 1 (Sept/Oct 2014)

[www.sprowston-nursery-playgroup.org.uk](http://www.sprowston-nursery-playgroup.org.uk)



Dear Parents and Carers,



A very warm welcome to all of our new children and their families and welcome back to our returning children and their families. We hope that whether you are joining us new or returning, that you all had a lovely summer and are ready for the start of the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the Autumn Term! For those of you who are joining us, welcome to your 1<sup>st</sup> Playgroup newsletter! Our half termly newsletter is just one of the ways in which we communicate with you and is usually sent out to you within the first couple of days of each half term. It is crammed packed with information about the activities we will be running for the children, fundraiser events we have planned, and lots of other information we feel it is important for you to know. At the end of each newsletter there is also a 'cut-off calendar' with a summary of dates for the up-coming term. If at any time there is anything you are unsure of, please feel free to ask any member of the team, we like to think that we are a friendly, approachable lot!! Every Half Term we have a very loose 'topic' which we plan some of the activities around. This half-term our topic is **Trees**, and below you will find a timetable for some of the activities we will be running during the weeks. In addition to these activities, the staff all work together to build in other activities for the children, based on what we learn about them, their individual interests and what they particularly enjoy doing. Thank you for reading.

Week	Dates	Subject	Activities	Please bring in (if you can)
1 & 2	4 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Welcome (settling-in)	Printed character colouring pictures & What I like to play with cut & stick	
3 & 4	15 <sup>th</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Leaves from trees	Leaf & Bark rubbing, Leaf Printing (painting)	Any large or unusual leaves or pieces of dry bark
5 & 6	29 <sup>th</sup> Sept - 10 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Leaves from trees	Iced biscuits with leaf shaped decoration	
7 & 8	13 <sup>th</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Things that grow in trees	Seed shakers	Small empty bottle with screw-top lid (e.g. empty drinks bottle)

**Dressing for the weather** - With our very changeable English weather, we would like to remind you that the children are able to access the outside area **during all weathers**, so please  ensure that they are dressed appropriately for the day. On sunny days, remember sunhats and to apply sun cream before they come to playgroup. In wet weather remember coats and wellies in a named bag (we sell wellie bags, please ask a staff member for more details). Please also ensure that your children's footwear are suitable for a playgroup environment where children will be running and climbing, **unsuitable shoes can cause injuries**. 

**Please ensure that all items brought into playgroup are CLEARLY named.** Thank you

**Please help build our family tree!** Our display boards in the 'Busy Room' are areas where we display work that children have made. At the start of each new academic year, we use one of the boards to create our own 'Family Tree' and we would like for you to contribute a photograph of your family to add to the tree. Past years have shown that the children really enjoy seeing themselves and their family within their playgroup. It provides them with something to talk about, and a sense of belonging.

Don't forget about 'Show and tell' in our afternoon sessions too, where we encourage children to bring in something to talk to the rest of the class about, could be a photograph, toy, picture anything they would like to share with the rest of us. This really helps to build communication and confidence skills. Thank you

**Parents Information Sharing Mornings:** We will be running Information Sharing Mornings on **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> and Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October.** Both mornings will run from 9:30am until 11:30am.

These mornings run in place of our normal session, and **you will be required to stay with your child,** they will be your responsibility during these mornings. About 2 weeks before hand, we will invite you to book a 15 minute appointment to see your child's Keyperson on that morning.

The aim of this is to give you an opportunity to chat with them about your child's progress. There will be toys and a craft table for the children, and tea, coffee and cakes for sale (proceeds go to a named charity) Look out for a letter with full details nearer the time.



**Cuppa, Shopping & Photographer Day:** Although we will be closed for Half Term from 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct - 31<sup>st</sup> Oct, we will be running a 'Cuppa and Autumn Fayre' on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October. This is always a very popular day! We will have stalls, tea/coffee & cakes and a professional photographer will be available to take pictures of your children, their brothers and sisters or the whole family. The photographer service is run on an appointment system, in order to keep waiting time to a minimum. More details to follow nearer the time.



**Summer BBQ:** It seems a long time ago, but back on lovely sunny evening in June we held our Summer BBQ. Thank you to all of you who helped to make the evening a success and those of you who came along and supported the evening. We raised a huge **£1432.09!!!!!!**

#### **Attention New Parents:**

- **Internal Mail System:** Our internal mail system works in the following way. Staff will leave letters and other information with your child's work on the tables in the hall at the end of each morning session. Each child's work is labelled with a laminated name card, which should be left at playgroup for future use.
- **Safety First!** If you haven't done so already, please return your child's emergency forms to your child's Key person at the start of term. We would like to remind parents and carers that only people who are named on their child's Emergency Contact forms will be allowed to collect them. It is advisable to introduce the Staff, in advance, to relatives or friends that you have named on this form. If this is not possible, then photographs can be kept in your child's confidential folder. If you are ever in a situation where you cannot collect your child, and have asked someone who is not listed on the emergency form to do so on your behalf, please call Playgroup on 01603 441529 and pass on the details of the person in question.

## Afternoon Sessions -

- If your child is staying all day, their **named** lunch box should be taken into the Kitchen area (Paint Room) where any items needing to be kept chilled, can be suitably stored in our Fridge. (Please Note; any items placed in the fridge **must** be clearly labelled with your child's name).
- **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE PACKED LUNCHES ON COAT PEGS.**
- When arriving for afternoon sessions (if your child was not there for the morning) please make sure your child is registered with the staff member at the entrance **before** taking their lunch box into the Busy Room.
- In addition to this (and not as a replacement), our afternoon children are also encouraged to use a 'self registration system'. This is located inside the door to the Busy Room. By encouraging self-registration, children are given a sense of independence, recognition of their name and also time. Normally a staff member is beside the self-register, but if not, please encourage your child to find their 'person' and move them from the 'Home' section into the 'School' section. Thank you.
- Children are also encouraged to bring in an item, which is of interest to them, for 'show and tell'. Please ensure any items are **clearly named** and placed on their 'name card'. Please note: Items which are brought in are for the purpose of show and tell only and should not be brought with the intention of the children being able to play with them. We have an extensive array of toys and activities available every day, therefore children do not need to bring additional toys to play with. Thank you.

**Healthy Snack Time:** We ask all children to contribute one piece of fruit, vegetable or other snack item (e.g. breadsticks/loaf of bread/raisins/fruit loaf etc.) once a week for sharing on our snack table. As part of our feedback from our questionnaires at the end of last term, some of the comments of 'what we could do differently' related to having a variety of food at snack time to encourage the children's understanding of living in a multi-cultural society. In



response to this we would encourage foods from any cultural background to be brought in and shared on our snack table, we want all children to feel valued at playgroup. So please don't forget to include items such as poppadum's, Naan breads, chapattis, rice cakes, tortillas. All we ask is that items are kept in their original packaging, and home-made items are given with a list of ingredients to prevent risk to persons with allergies. **All items must be free from nuts & peanuts.**



 **Committee:** Our next committee meeting is on **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> Sept** at 8:00pm, held at Playgroup in our 'Busy Room' - please come along and find out all about what we do - new members are needed and **very** welcome. Also our **AGM** will be held on **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November** at 8.00pm with a committee meeting to follow - more details nearer the time.

**Questionnaire Responses:** At our Parent Information Sharing Mornings in May, parents of children who were moving on to school in July were asked if they would complete a questionnaire to help us improve our practice as a playgroup. We received 8 responses: Below are some of the things these parents feel we do well:

- Build children's confidence
- Wide variety of toys and equipment
- Friendly and helpful staff
- A good mix of free-play and structured environment
- Being able to stay for lunch with their friends
- Involving teachers from local schools at the time of transition to school & lots of preparation and support for a smooth transition onto school.

Some of the areas where a few parents feel we need to improve are:

- 'Some mornings have been a little late to open' - It is rare occasions that the doors are a few minutes late opening, and for that we apologise, but please be assured, we are continually working hard to ensure we are ready and safe by 09:00am
- 'Don't presume when there are changes to sessions, people know about them' - Any changes to normal sessions are always put into our half-termly newsletter, in addition to this we put up posters on the door, messages on Facebook and our webpage. We do try and remind you verbally a few days before as well, however we ask you, as parents and carers for your children, to make notes of the changes as we inform you.

We would like to thank all of the parents who took the time to complete the questionnaires; we really do value your opinion and are constantly striving to improve our practice for your children. Thank you.

### Newsletter by e-mail

As you can imagine, the cost to produce our newsletter every half-term for 70 families is quite a large one, as we are a non-profit making charity, we are hoping to switch from printing our newsletter to e-mailing it to all of our parents every half-term. We would, therefore, be grateful if you could kindly use the slip attached to the front of this newsletter to provide us with your email address to forward all future newsletters to. The benefit to you, is that even if your child is away from playgroup, you will still receive the newsletter straight to your inbox, so that you know what is happening when they come back. Don't forget, a copy of the newsletter is always available on our website [www.sprowston-nursery-playgroup.org.uk](http://www.sprowston-nursery-playgroup.org.uk).



## Diary of Events for 1st half Autumn Term 2014/2015



### September 2014

**Thursday 4th** *Playgroup re-opens for Autumn Term (1)* 9:00am

Wednesday  
24<sup>th</sup> Committee Meeting - Playgroup 'Busy Room' 8:00pm

### October 2014

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> Parents Information Sharing Morning 9:30am - 11:30am  
(for parents of Tue/Thur morning children) (by appointment system)

Wednesday  
22<sup>nd</sup> Parents Information Sharing Morning 9:30am - 11:30am  
(for parents of Wed/Fri morning children) (by appointment system)

**Wednesday**  
22<sup>nd</sup> *Playgroup closes for Half Term* 3:00pm

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> Photographer/Coffee Morning & Autumn  
Fayre 09:30 - 14:00

### November 2014

**Monday 3rd** *Playgroup re-opens for Autumn Term (2)* 12:00pm

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> Committee AGM followed by meeting 8:00pm



# Policy and Procedure Spotlight



Every half term we focus on one of our Policies and Procedures. This half term we have chosen our 'Outdoor Play Policy'. A full copy of all of our 'Policies and Procedures' can be found on our noticeboard.

## OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

### Statement of intent

Our Playgroup recognises the benefits from viewing the outdoor and indoor area as one learning environment. Outdoor play should be available at each session throughout the year.

### Aim

We aim to:

- Provide a secure and stimulating outdoor environment in which all our children can thrive and in which all contributions are valued.
- Involve parents by asking them to provide suitable clothing, hats and footwear for relevant weather conditions.
- Offer a curriculum to the child which encourages them to develop positive attitudes to outside play which mirrors and complements the indoor provision.

We do this by:

- Making staff fully aware of our garden risk assessment and their role and responsibilities in carrying it out.
- Involving all our staff in planning the outdoor curriculum.
- Allowing children to 'self-regulate' their own body temperature in hot or cold weather. Where this is not appropriate staff will encourage children to take sensible precautions, i.e. find some shade or go inside to warm up.
- Providing the children with the same types of activities outside that they can access indoors, including;
  - Writing materials
  - Sand
  - Water
  - Books
  - Painting
  - Construction
  - Musical instruments
  - IT equipment
- Ensuring that we have some outdoor storage which can be accessed by the children so they can make decisions and choices about their outdoor play.
- Sun-cream will only be applied if a permission form is signed by a parent/carer. Sun-cream must be brought to Playgroup in a named bottle on a daily basis and given to a staff-member. Sun-cream should not be left in the child's bag.
- The procedure to follow should there be an unexpected intruder into the garden area, staff members within the garden area will evacuate the garden by blowing a whistle to call the children inside at which time a head count will take place. Emergency evacuation of the outside area will be practiced once per half term.