



Garretts Green Nursery School

May Newsletter 2016

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Dear Parents,

The school year is flying by and the last few weeks of the year are always very busy. There will be a number of events which we hope you will be able to attend and we will provide you with details of these as they approach. A list of dates for your diary was put in your child's drawer but if you have not received this please let us know.

Thank you for joining us at our recent Parents' Consultations. We are extremely fortunate to have such committed parents and attendance was almost 100%. Thank you again.

Many of you have already returned your questionnaire to us. This is really appreciated as it is an opportunity for us to gain your views about what we do well and how you think we can improve. The questionnaires are always reviewed and the responses analysed so that we can identify how we can develop further.

In the past, we have made changes to a number of practices based on what parents have said that they would like to see. The most obvious of these is the one-way system from the front door through the classrooms to the rear exits so that the children are not overwhelmed in the corridor by parents trying to leave the way they came in.

We cannot guarantee that we can always make changes but we do always listen and take note and often reply to your comments.

If you have not yet returned your questionnaire please may I ask you to spare a few minutes to complete it and return it to us.

Thank you.

Forest School

Forest School is one of our great successes and the children enjoy every minute especially the mud and climbing the tree, which I am sure you already know!

During the summer term, the children use the site at the rear of the school and they are learning about fire rules at the moment so that they will be able to toast marshmallows, etc over the open fire later on.

Please may I reassure you that these sessions are led only by our two Forest School Leaders, Emma and Debbie, who are trained to deliver fire sessions safely. The children's safety is always our priority and the sessions are risk-assessed and well-supported.

If you have any questions please ask a member of staff.

Sun-safety

At last, it seems as though we may see some warmer weather and we are conscious that this brings its own risks.

Please help us by providing your child with a named sun hat, preferably one which protects their neck. The children love to be outdoors when the weather is warm and they are unaware that they may burn in strong sun. We always try to monitor how long the children stay outdoors but please use sun screen before your child comes into school. If you would like us to reapply cream during the session, we are happy to do so if we have a named bottle of cream in school. We try to encourage children to rub the cream in themselves but always help them by applying the cream initially.

Please also ensure that your child wears sensible footwear through the summer. We cannot allow children to wear strappy sandals or flip flops for safety reasons.

Please Close the Gates!

We place the highest priority on security, as you are aware, and we pride ourselves on ensuring that we do all we can to keep your children safe.

However, as I have mentioned previously in each newsletter, I am aware that some parents are leaving the gate open when entering or leaving the site.

As soon as the children are in the building the gate is locked. I usually stand at the door to welcome parents and children but also to ensure that no one comes into the building who we do not know and to prevent any of the children from 'escaping'.

At these times, the staff are with the children and cannot be spared to stand at the gate to ensure that this is closed behind parents .

We ask you all to help us by making sure that you always close the gate after you have come into the school or when you leave. The vast majority of parents support us but I am aware that a small number of parents are less vigilant.

Keeping children safe is everybody's responsibility and I must stress that by leaving the gate open you are not only putting others at risk but you are risking the safety of your own child.

Please make sure that the gate at the side of the building is closed and that the main gates are closed and the bolts drawn.

Thank you.

The Future of Nursery Schools

Nursery Schools have been in existence for many years, the majority in Birmingham since the 1930s and 1940s. Garretts Green Nursery School was established in 1947 to provide care and education for women who were returning to work in post-War times.

The provision offered in Nursery Schools in Birmingham is exceptional in that all are either Good or Outstanding as reported by OFSTED and the quality of provision has never been doubted. In fact, Birmingham Nursery Schools are acknowledged nationally and internationally for the expertise and involvement in research.

Our own school is well-known for its support for children with additional learning needs, particularly for those children with autism and our practice led to filming here for the Autism Education Trust training materials which are used nationally to support staff working with children with autism. Other Nursery Schools are also involved in a wide range of specialisms and research into early education.

Over recent decades, there have been a number of threats to Nursery Schools due to diminishing budgets for local councils and since the late 1990s over two hundred have been closed across the country. We are facing difficult times again and Claire and I have attended an All Party Parliamentary Group meeting in London, with another planned for late May, to campaign for improved funding for early education and for ensuring that the quality and expertise of Nursery Schools is not lost.

Please help us! There is a petition to support Nursery Schools which we hope you will sign. It takes just seconds to complete and would make a huge difference. If enough people sign up, the petition has to be presented to parliament for consideration. This can be accessed at:

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/126310>

Summer Events

Over the next few weeks there are many events to which you are invited and details of some of these are below

Monday 9th May: The Life Caravan.

The children will be visiting The Life Caravan to meet Harold the Giraffe who explores health and hygiene with the children. They will visit during the morning or afternoon session but if you would like to see what the children will be learning you may visit at the start of the session after your child is in Nursery from 8.30 to 9.00am and from 12.30-1.00pm. The Life Caravan will be parked outside the main entrance in Horrell Road. Please tell your child's worker when you arrive if you would like to visit the Life Caravan.

Tuesday 24th May: Group Photographs

Our photographer will visit to take photographs of your child's Family Group (Green, Yellow, Red, Blue and Purple). These photographs are for Nursery children only and are not open to families this time. The photographs will be ready well in advance of the end of the summer term.

Friday 27th May: School closed for new intake visit

You may remember that we offered your child a play session during the summer term last year and we will be offering the same opportunity to the new intake. We have decided to arrange this for the last day of the half term to minimise any inconvenience. We break up for the half term holiday on Thursday 26th May. On **Monday 6th June**, school re-opens after the half-term holiday

Thursday 9th June: Outdoors Family Workshop

This is an opportunity for parents to see what the children do in our outdoors activities. We hope to offer short Forest School sessions as well as some planting and other outdoor activities. All welcome! Further details to follow. You are advised that the ground in Forest School is uneven and may be slightly boggy so boots or wellies are recommended for all adults. No heels please!

If the weather is very wet we may need to rearrange the workshop.

Friday 10th June: Queen's Official Birthday celebrations

We will be celebrating with a 'street party' event in school but this will be for the children only. They may wear red, white and blue for the day.

Friday 17th June: Family Day

In the past, we have held a Fathers' Day when fathers have visited to take part in a variety of activities with their children (making and flying paper planes, football, and other activities). This was in response to government drives to involve fathers in school. However, we have decided to extend this to all parents. There is no fixed theme other than to encourage parents and carers to join us and to see what their children do in school. Details to follow. All welcome!

Tuesday 21st June: Grandparents' Day

All grandparents are welcome to join us for a session in nursery. There will be a selection of activities to do with their grandchild. Parents unable to attend the earlier Family Day may wish to attend this session. Times to follow.

Thursday 23rd June: EU Referendum - School closed.

Staff will be carrying out home visits for the new September intake as the building will be used as a polling station.

Tuesday 5th July: Water Day

Each year, we hold a water day when the children have lots of water activities, most of which involve soaking the staff. It is always lots of fun and the children have a great time. We ask you to send a change of clothes and a towel in a named bag. Wellies are also needed as well as shoes to change into when the fun has ended! We hope this is a warm day but if the weather is cool we may need to rearrange the day.

More dates over the page!



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*' Working together for
Children and Families'*

End of Year Reports and Parents' Consultations

Each child will have an end of year report which you will receive on Monday 11th July. In previous years, parents have told us that there is no need for a Parents' Consultation as the report is extremely detailed. However, we understand that you may wish to speak to your child's teacher and this can be arranged at a convenient time

Thursday 14th July: Family Picnic

Roy, the Magician presents a magic show for the children and parents, with lots of fun and games. Families are asked to bring a picnic and a picnic blanket if you have one and we will then eat in the garden with music and games afterwards. We have been very lucky in the past to have great weather but, again, if it is wet we would need to re-arrange this event.

Thursday 21st July: Sheldon Country Park

This is our last day! We meet at the park at 10.00am and walk together through the park to see the planes take off and land before returning to the farm area for a picnic.

Transition to Primary Schools

Primary Schools generally make their own arrangements for transition meetings during the last few weeks of the term and you will be contacted directly by the schools to inform you of event dates and times. Please try to attend these sessions as they really help to make the move stress-free.

Don't forget!

Please support our campaign to keep Nursery Schools

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/126310>

**We hope that your child enjoys the last term of their year in Nursery,
It has been a pleasure to see their progress since September and to watch them
grow in confidence. Thank you all for your support through the year.**