



May Newsletter 2017

Garretts Green Nursery School

Dear Parents,

May 2017

It's hard to believe that there is little more than one half term to go before most of your children leave us to transfer to primary school. The year has flown by and the children have been a joy to teach but we still have so much to fit in to the last weeks!

You will now have had confirmation about the school allocated for your child for September 2017. We are not provided with details directly so, if you haven't already told us which school you have been allocated please would you confirm this to your child's key worker. Thank you.

You will need to confirm directly with that school that you require the place, It is important that you make contact to confirm that you are accepting the place. Most schools are over-subscribed and re-allocate unwanted places to the next child on the waiting list.

We will shortly begin to work on transition with the children. The primary schools usually have their own transition arrangements and you will be invited to the new school for meetings but we also start work around the move to different schools so that the children are fully prepared. If you have any concerns about this please don't hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

Thank you to all the parents of the children who have just joined us. They are enjoying the experiences and have settled well thanks to the way you have prepared them. I am sure that they will continue to enjoy the Summer Term and return in September for the full school year.

End of Year Transfer Documents and Parents' Consultations

Our Parent's Consultations before Easter were well-attended, both during the daytime sessions and in the evening and it was lovely to see so many of you in school to discuss your child's progress.

During the second half of the Summer Term we will be completing an end of year Transfer Document or school report. These documents are very detailed and we generally do not offer a Parents' Consultation unless you feel that the report does not offer enough information. In that case you would be able to make an appointment with your child's Key Worker.

However, for the children who have only just started at Garretts Green Nursery School, the Transfer Document will be very brief and if you would like to speak to a member of staff about your child's progress we will offer some possible dates later in the term.

30 Hours Funded Childcare

Our September 2017 offer is likely to be different to previous arrangements due to the changes in Government funding arrangements.

If you are a parent of a child who started here after Easter and who will be returning in September, please may I ask you to return your documentation to us as soon as possible so that places may be confirmed.

The new arrangements are explained fully in the letters we sent to you but if you need any further advice please don't hesitate to ask.

Parents' Questionnaires

Thank you for completing our Parents' Questionnaire. We had 37 responses and the comments have mostly been extremely positive. I can't thank you enough for your overwhelming support for the school and feel very privileged to have had that support!

We always analyse the responses and report to the school's Governing Body. The last Governors' Meeting was just before the Easter break and I gave a brief summary of the responses at that time. There is a copy of the report attached.

An issue which was raised by one parent was that some aspects of our website are not up to date. This has been a concern for us, too. The majority of the information is current but we had not realised that when the new dates for the diary were posted the old dates had remained elsewhere on the site as an events calendar. Obviously, this could cause some confusion and is being corrected.

It may be useful to highlight that Emma writes a weekly blog about what the children have done in school. These blogs usually have a photograph attached and you may see your child there if you have agreed to their photographs being used. Emma now also emails parents when their child's photograph is shown. This is a good starting point for discussing activities with your child, especially if he or she tells you very little!

If you haven't already done so, please take a few minutes to look at the blogs. Some of you have added a comment about the children's work or about an event and we are very grateful for those positive comments. Thank you.

We do not employ a technician to make changes to our website and some changes can only be made by the host company. Staff have a full timetable with the children and making the changes, blogging or contacting the web hosts are tasks that are always completed in our own time so please be patient with us.

Summer Term Events

During the Summer Term we will be offering a range of events and details are attached for most of the events.

There will be:

- **Wednesday 24th May:** Group Photographs
- **Friday 26th May:** Break up for half term holiday
- **Monday 5th June:** School reopens
- **Thursday 8th June:** Closed for General Election
- **Friday 9th June:** School closed for new intake play sessions
- **Friday 16th June:** Grandparents/Family Day
- **Friday 7th July and Saturday 8th July:** Our Anniversary celebrations - a Family Picnic (with magician) on Friday followed by other events on Saturday (More details to follow)
- **Monday 17th July:** End of Year Transfer Documents to be handed out to parents
- **Wednesday 19th July:** A water day (Dependant on the weather being warm- if we have a really warm spell of weather prior to this date, the water day may be rearranged)
- **Thursday 20th July:** End of Year Awards
- **Friday 21st July:** Last day in school
- **Monday 24th July:** Family trip to Sheldon Country Park. No Nursery this day.

Please may we also remind you that we will be closed on **Thursday 8th June** for the General Elections as our school will again be used as a polling station for the day. The Elections Office has been very apologetic for the closure and for the short notice but, of course, this was not expected.

During the Summer we also begin to offer events for the new cohort, as you know. School will be closed on **Friday 9th June** for the new Intake Play Sessions. Staff will also be carrying out home visits. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause but we know how it helped your children last year and want to offer the same opportunities to the new children. Thank you.

Our Garden

The front garden, where you line up, is looking more Spring-like now and the trees and plants are beginning to come to life. We have a real problem with the grass though, and Lee has sown some grass seed. Please may we ask you to avoid using the grass until the seed has had a chance to grow a little. Please also make sure that you keep pushchairs on the path as the wheels tend to churn up the damp ground. Thank you.

Thank you.

Our New Greenhouse

We are very grateful to **Happy Families (PTA)** who raised funds at the Family Workshop and through their Easter Egg raffle. The generous response from parents has been amazing and we are very grateful to all of you for your generosity. It has meant that we have been able to purchase a new greenhouse with the money raised through just these two events.

We had an old plastic greenhouse which was donated by a grandparent several years ago but which was destroyed during a storm. The new greenhouse is bigger and more substantial and will be a valuable resource for the school, allowing children to learn about growing seeds and plants as part of our curriculum.

Gardening, Growing and Outdoors Family Workshop

Thank you everyone for joining us at our Gardening, Growing and Outdoors Workshop. We were lucky to have beautiful weather and the children really enjoyed themselves. We hope you did too! Thank you for all the positive comments

Gardeners World Live

During the last week of term, Emma and I collected a wheelbarrow and compost ready to submit an entry in a Gardeners' World Live exhibition at the NEC in June. This is a new venture for us and hopefully we will have the planting ready for the deadline. We will be planting and growing seeds for, 'A Meal in a Barrow'.

Linking the growing to our 70th celebrations, we decided to grow produce for a World War II recipe which is similar to cottage pie but with no meat! The vegetables are cooked for the base and then mashed potato is placed on top.

We are hoping it all goes well and we will keep you updated about the event at the NEC.

Owls visit

On Tuesday 9th May, we were visited by three owls and their handler. The children were absolutely fascinated and were able to watch the owls flying in the room from adult to adult, so close to them that they could feel the breeze made by the birds' wings. The children learned about what the owls eat, about how their heads turn and so much more.

We used our School Fund to cover the cost of the visit which was extremely worthwhile.



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Children and Families '*

School Website

The website is in the process of being updated but please take a look at the blogs to see what the children have been doing in Nursery. Thank you.

Punctuality

Please remember that our morning start time is 8.25am and our afternoon session starts at 12.25pm Monday to Thursday. Friday morning sessions end at 11.05 am and afternoons begin at 12.55pm. Please arrive promptly to avoid your child missing the valuable start to the session.

Naming clothes

Please ensure that your child's clothing is named. As the weather gets warmer, the children often take off jumpers or cardigans and they all look identical. Please write your child's name on the label. If your child has a hat, which we advise you to provide, the hat should also be named please.

Sun cream

Please apply sun cream to your child before arriving at Nursery. We are happy to help your child re-apply cream later in the session with your permission. If you would like us to do so, please speak to your child's key worker. You would need to bring a named bottle of cream/lotion to school. Thank you.

Nursery Places 2017-18

We are currently offering places for the children who are due to start Nursery in September 2017. If you have a child who is eligible and if you have not registered him/her here, we have just a few places remaining.

Please see Lesley or Trish for application forms.

Thank you.

Thank you again for all your support during the year so far.

Summer Events

Wednesday 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.

Thursday 8th June: Closed for General Election

Friday 9th June: 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.

Friday 16th June: Grandparents' / Fathers' / 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. We have also held a separate Grandparents' Day previously but have decided to join these events to make one special Family Day. Details to follow. All welcome!

Friday 7th July: Family Picnic and 70th Anniversary Celebration

Our School has been open since 1946-47 and we are celebrating the event, hopefully in the sunshine, at the end of the year. We have a magician who will put on a magic show for the children and parents and there will be other activities that day too. We end the session with a family picnic outdoors. Please bring along your picnic blankets and picnic and join us for the morning or afternoon. All welcome.

Saturday 8th July: 70th Anniversary Celebration

Our Happy Families PTA is organising a very special day on Saturday 8th July to continue the celebrations for the 70th Anniversary. There will be plenty of fun for everyone! We are hoping to organise a run around the block in fancy dress for dads (Or anyone else who wants to join in!) We hope to offer a cake sale, afternoon tea, games, craft stalls and much more.

More details to follow. In the meantime, we are looking for donations of the following items:

- Vintage china cups and saucers, (not necessarily matching but not damaged, please),
- Bottles of wine, etc for a bottle tombola,
- Empty tin cans
- Donations for raffle prizes

Wednesday 19th 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.

Monday 24th July: Sheldon Country Park Picnic-details to follow