

The Old Station Nursery, Benson Newsletter
May – June 2010



Welcome to our summer newsletter and it's great to see everyone looking happier now that it's warmed up a bit and we can all really enjoy being outside, rather than enduring it! Paula (our Ops Manager in Lincolnshire) and Maxine (our Waddington Nursery Manager) have been attending a series of training days about how to develop outdoor practice and to provide greater experiences for children outside. This has already included a staff training evening at Waddington which saw a lot of 'big kids' playing with water, guttering, funnels and hosepipes. We will be sharing the programme with all the managers through a series of staff training sessions and hope to see lots of new ideas across the nurseries.

We have been following the political developments with interest over recent weeks, as any new policy could have a real impact on how we deliver the free Early Years Entitlement, as well as possible new direction on training and qualification requirements. I've put a section in at the end of the newsletter to let you know how you can have your say in shaping new policy, so do complete the NDNA survey if you are able to. As always, we'll keep you posted on any developments that we are aware of. I mentioned the introduction of the 15 hours per week funding in my last newsletter; some of our nurseries are already delivering this as part of pilot studies, but all will offer it from September. Your nursery manager will let you know how this will affect your invoice and any changes to session times.

In the meantime, enjoy the sunshine, for as long as it lasts and don't forget to send a sun hat and sun cream in with your child, to allow us to keep them safe in the sun.

Best wishes,

Sarah Steel
Managing Director

HEAD OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS:

Operations Managers:
Emma Pittam – 07973 798050 or
opsmanager@theoldstationnursery.co.uk

Paula Leeson – 07791 806502
opsnorth@theoldstationnursery.co.uk

Sarah Steel – 07725 049744
sarahsteel@theoldstationnursery.co.uk

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

I am hopeful that the summer weather will decide to return soon, and therefore, could I please ask that every child has a named sun hat as well as a tube of named sun cream (of at least factor 30) in nursery every day. Please ensure that the sun cream is handed to a member of staff and not left in your child's bag. There is a risk that the children could gain access to potentially harmful items if creams etc are left on pegs.

In our last newsletter I mentioned that we were in the process of refining our menu. I am pleased to confirm that we are now using the new, improved menu and so far it seems to be going down really well with the children. You can find a copy of the menu in the foyer of the nursery; please let me know if you have any comments.

I am very pleased to be able to report that we recently had our Food Hygiene inspection carried out by Oxfordshire County Council who awarded us four stars, which is classed as a 'very good'.

As we are now able to e-mail invoices, I would like to reduce the amount of printed invoices being prepared as much as possible. Could you please, therefore, let me have a note of an e-mail address to which your invoice can be sent each month. I will then provide you with the password required to access this.

We are also now up and running with the card machine in the nursery and so can take payments in person or over the phone using a debit or credit card.

I am pleased to confirm that Cameka, Vicki and Louise have all completed their NVQ Level 2 qualifications in Children's Care, Learning & Development. Well done to you all!

We are finding that, at busy drop off and collection times, the foyer is becoming a little bit congested again. Could I please remind you to wait outside the nursery building until your child's start/finish time – weather permitting of course?

Could I also please request that you do not let your child come into nursery eating biscuits, sweets etc as this can cause difficulties when other children do not have the same.

Finally, I would like to remind you that we have an 'employee of the month' reward scheme, where other members of staff or parents, can nominate someone

whom they feel has done something that little bit special to deserve the award. Nomination forms are available in the office. Please come and fill one in if you would like to.

BABIES

Our babies are very busy at the moment making lots of beautiful paintings for our Summer displays. We are getting out and about too, either in our little outside area or taking the babies out for walks around the Station.

You may have noticed that we have had a change around in the baby room again. We are creating different areas for the babies, and currently have a 'home corner' with a variety of cooking utensils and play food which the babies are really enjoying.

1-2's

You may have noticed some slight changes in the 1-2's room recently. We now have a 'cosy corner' which is proving very popular. Some of the children like to sit there to look at books and photo albums; others just like to have a lie down! We have introduced some new items to our 'home corner' as well - mainly a washing up bowl and washing utensils which the children love. The children are also really enjoying role play with the ironing board and basket of clothes; some will stand and pretend to iron clothes, others have found more inventive ways of using it!

2-3's

We have been busy with cooking activities in the 2-3's room. We have made flapjacks, shortbread and jelly boats (using an orange, straws and rice paper for sails).

We are spending time looking at different shapes through sponge painting, sticking shapes, shape sorters and stencils. We have also been working with colour through a variety of different mediums, including finger painting to create a rainbow and making flowers using seeds soaked in different food colourings.

PRE-SCHOOL

In Pre-school, we have put up a world map and are asking families to bring in photos of places they have visited. We have already received several photos and these are forming part of an exciting and educational display, with children already keen to point out their pictures.

As well as our 'weather' theme, the class has just finished drawing pictures of sunflowers. The children enjoyed being able to copy and talk about their flower and what they were doing. These pictures, together

with photos of the children creating their art work, are displayed in the classroom and have brightened up the room.

Finally, both pre-school rooms have just received some large outdoor 'mini-beast' and 'number-line' displays which we will be putting up in the outside area.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB

We've been making lots of dens here in after-school club. Through observing the children, we added some blankets to their play, followed by cushions and also the parachute to extend their imaginations!

The children have recently set up their own restaurant, making 'pretend' meals. Following on from this, we plan to do some cooking with the children very soon.

Best wishes

Julie Crake



PAYMENT OF NURSERY FEES FROM 1ST JUNE 2010

As you may be aware, we are in the process of registering with the bank to accept payment by direct debit, as well as standing order and on-line bank transfer. We had hoped to have this in place by 1st June, but the whole process has taken longer than we had hoped and will not now be ready until 1st July at the earliest. We will therefore continue to accept cheques and cash until this date, but would encourage you to look at alternative methods of payment in the interim. We have now successfully installed card payment machines at most of our nurseries and where they are not available you can pay over the phone by card, so please do make use of this facility. We will keep you informed of the change over to electronic payments over the next month.



PARENT FACT SHEETS

We have recently started compiling a series of parent information sheets which are available to download from our website. This month we focus on 'Toddler Tantrums' and 'Biting in the Toddler Years'. Do keep taking a look because we will be adding more each month – we hope that you find these useful.



HAVE YOUR SAY TO THE GOVERNMENT ABOUT CHILDCARE ISSUES

There have been so many changes over recent years to how Early Years is funded and controlled by the Department of Children, Schools and Families. In the run up to the election the trade bodies who represent both the childcare sector and parents' interests lobbied hard to the 3 main political parties, to remind them what issues they considered should be at the top of the agenda for a new government. The National Day Nurseries Association, our main representative body, is now working hard to ensure that parents and nurseries are represented by the new coalition government. They have asked both nurseries and parents to complete an on-line survey to inform their initial briefings with the new government. If you would like your views to be heard (including those on how the Early Years Entitlement should be administered), then please do go to:

www.ndna.org.uk and click on the 'parents' link.