

The Old Station Nursery, Waterside Newsletter
Nov - Dec 2010



We are now all well into the swing of this term and Christmas is just around the corner, so watch out for the inevitable invasion of glitter and all things sparkly that herald the festive season. We hope you will all be able to spend some time at nursery during the run up to Christmas, to join in some celebrations and see all the great things that are going on. Don't forget you are always welcome to come and see what your child is doing at nursery; I appreciate that work commitments can make this really difficult, but if you have a spare hour at any time and would like to come and join in with a session, please do ask your nursery manager.

During the last couple of months we have been rolling out the baby room project known as 'Beginning with Babies' across the company; all our settings have now taken part in the inspirational training with Mary Barlow in Grantham and have come back with ideas to improve the environment and routines for the babies in their care. We are now also trying the 'Fun on the Floor' programme too, which will help to extend this learning into the 2 year old rooms. If you want to learn a little more about the training, do have a look at www.thetotempole.co.uk; they also have an excellent on-line shop, which includes some fabulous resources for young children. All our nursery baby room staff enjoyed spending some of their budgets in the shop when they visited and we have the lovely wooden kitchens in most of our baby rooms now.

We always get some really lovely comments and thanks when families leave nursery, but in case you are really pleased with something in particular or just want to say 'well done' to the staff who look after your child, we have introduced some special 'well done' cards which should be in the reception area of all the nurseries. If you would like to give someone a pat on the back, do fill one of these in and give it in to the manager, it will be passed on to that member of staff and will also be recorded for their next appraisal. I hope this will help staff to feel valued; we also have several internal ways of recognising great performance and are always looking for new ways of doing this.

During the last month about 20 of our room supervisors have attended a new company training course, where they spend a day with each other learning about leadership and management, customer service and how to run staff appraisals. We ran a pilot course in Abingdon and one in Lincoln and are now using the feedback from the supervisors to fine tune the course. We will run the next round of courses in February and hope this will really help us to develop

our staff teams at every level.

After a long administrative challenge, we finally have our direct debit scheme set up. I hope you all received our letter explaining this and a direct debit form; if you have not, then please check that your nursery manager has an up to date e-mail address for you, so we can make sure you receive regular mailings without having to dig them out of the bottom of your child's bag. We hope you will take advantage of the direct debit system as it should make life much simpler all around and make nursery fees one less thing to have to remember. If you are using Employer Childcare Vouchers to pay some part of your fees, please remember to note this on your direct debit form too. Don't forget, if you sign up before Christmas we will give you a free copy of our book, 'All Aboard', which has lots of ideas to fill the weekends and holidays.

One of our former UK nursery managers has recently moved to Kenya whilst her husband is serving there with the RAF. She approached us to ask whether we would consider supporting a local centre for children of Masai families, who have disabilities and need extra support. She was amazed by what a difference the Kajaido Centre made to the lives of these children and decided to try and help. We are delighted to be working with the A.I.C. Kajaido Child Care Centre, both to raise funds to support their work, but also to allow the children in our nurseries to understand how different the lives of children in other parts of the world can be. Hopefully by now you will all have received a leaflet about the project and may have decided you could help our initial Christmas appeal by sending a very small toy or gift in, which will be packaged up and sent off to the centre later this month. If you'd like to find out more about the project, have a look at www.aick.org. We hope this will be a really positive relationship and help our children to learn about the world in a very personal way.

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

Hello and welcome to our latest newsletter. The last few months have been very busy and enjoyable here with new children joining us and staff attending many training courses. Throughout November and December, Kathy, Eileen and Tammy are attending Pediatric First Aid, Tammy another two day course on Autism in the Early years, Donna Creative and Critical Thinking and Presentation skills, Yvonne High Scope, Stacey Beginning with Babies, Kathy and Becky Makaton beginners workshop and Jackie Developing Senco Skills. All courses that staff attend are feedback at our monthly staff meetings.

Jackie has decided to take the plunge and start her foundation degree in Childhood Services (Early years) which will prove really valuable to both the children and the staff, as Jackie will be coming back with lots of fantastic ideas to use here at Nursery.

I wish to thank you all for your swift response to our emergency evacuation; we appreciate you had to leave work to come and collect your child but I'm sure you will agree that the safety of the children is paramount.

Thank you for an excellent turn out on parents evening; we really value the support and interest you have in your child's time spent with us. Your child's key person spends many hours on your child's Learning Journeys and we are sure you will treasure them for a long time. We would like you to have an input into these books; if your child has a new experience or a special occasion (such as a visit to Santa's grotto or going to a farm) please write all about it or provide some photos. This will be a valuable addition to your child's treasured book.

Finally, please can you make sure that your child has the appropriate clothing for plenty of outdoor learning and play – each child needs a pair of wellies, a hat, gloves and a waterproof suit. This will ensure that your child keeps dry and warm and your washing pile keeps down!

Many thanks,
Donna

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Purple Day 25th November; this is in aid of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Week. Staff and children will be dressing in purple and we will be having a fun packed afternoon with purple food, purple non-alcoholic punch for parents and games for the children. Everyone is welcome to join in the fun and games.

Kenya Day (date to be confirmed); Look out for the date of our Kenya Day which will be displayed at nursery. During the day we will be having African food and music and dressing up where the children will learn

more about the way that the Maasai tribes live. This is linked to our supporting the AIC childcare centre in Kajiado, Kenya. Thank you to everyone who has donated a gift for the children there this Christmas.

Children's Christmas Party Thursday 23rd December; 2.00 – 4.00pm. Everyone is welcome to come in and join us and have lots of fun. We hope that Santa Claus will also be able to coordinate a visit. The children will be singing Christmas carols too. We will be asking for a donation for each child attending and all the money raised will be given to the children at the Kajiado centre.

Christmas Closure; the nursery will close at 1.00pm on 24th December and will reopen on Tuesday 4th January.

Little Stars Room

Hello to one and all. In the past few months we have welcomed some new faces - Finlay, Daniel, Damian, Evie, Phoebe and Freya. As you will see from Donna's notes, we are all keeping busy attending some fabulous courses at the moment and will hopefully be bringing fresh new ideas back to the setting for our Little Stars. Becky and Eileen are putting together a Key Person box and if your child has a favourite trinket at home please feel free to add this to our collection – do ask them some more about it.

Christmas will be upon us very soon - look out for our calendars, cards and keep sakes coming your way. If you have any unwanted Christmas decorations please feel free to donate them to our Little Stars Christmas tree.

Don't forget if you see your child do a "wow" moment at home, please take a photo for their special book.

Little Gems

As the festive season approaches, Little Gems children will be full of excitement and sparkle as well. We will be doing many creative activities, learning new songs and exploring play outdoors in the winter environment – cold frosty mornings, snowy days and the dark evenings after tea. Can we remind you to pack a spare set of clothes for your child; this is really helpful as play and exploration can get very messy, particularly outdoors.

Just like to say a big thank you to all the children and parents that took part in the preparation for the decoration of the Little Gems room ready for our Halloween party and fancy dress competition on the 29th October. The children were actively involved in making spiders, pumpkins, cats, ghosts, spider webs, witches hats and brooms and bats and mice. On the day of the party we saw many wonderful and spooky costumes both on the children and staff. We played many games including musical instruments and pass

the parcel which was followed by the fancy dress judging. Neve from Little Stars won 1st prize for her sparkly witches costume and with Logan winning runner up. Ethan won 1st prize for his Batman costume and Harry won 2nd prize for his ghost costume in the Little Gems room. This was followed by a party tea and a ghost hunt in the garden. A fun time was had by all!

We would also like to remind parents to check your child's tray daily when collecting your child - this is where you will find your child's pictures, belongings and important letters.

Many Birthday wishes to Caius, Dominic, Harry and William who are all turning three years old over the next couple of months.

Finally we would like to leave you with one of our Christmas songs that you might like to sing with your child:

Twinkle twinkle Christmas star
How I wonder what you are
Up above the tree so high
Like an angel in the sky
Twinkle twinkle Christmas star
How I wonder what you are.

