



THE OLD STATION NURSERY, INNSWORTH MARCH - APRIL 2012

We have had a really busy couple of months here at our Head Office in Faringdon, which has seen Rachel Attwood join us as Operations Manager with overall responsibility for all of our nurseries. Rachel is a very experienced regional manager and has enjoyed visiting all of our sites and meeting the teams at each place. Between us we have enjoyed discussing all the things that we think we are doing really well, as well as identifying areas which we want to improve on, and this has led to a detailed action plan which we are now all working our way through!

At the same time, we have taken part in 2 pilot inspections with OFSTED, at our Linton-on-Ouse and Innsworth nurseries. As you may be aware, the Early Years Foundation Stage (the curriculum followed by all nurseries, pre-schools and childminders) is being revised and we are expecting the final version to be published next week, ready for implementation in September this year. OFSTED will therefore change their inspection framework to reflect the revised curriculum, so we volunteered to take part in their pilot inspection programme to find out more about the changes which will be made. It was a very useful exercise, if a little stressful for the teams involved, and Rachel has a list of changes which will come into force with the new framework and is now working with the managers to make sure they are prepared. I don't think this will make any visible difference to the children, or to yourselves, but will hopefully help us to continue to drive quality and offer the very best environment for your children.

We will share the highlights of the new EYFS once it is published and will have further updates on any changes as we move towards September, but do ask if you are interested in any particular aspect of it.

Best wishes,

Sarah Steel

HEAD OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS:
sarahsteel@theoldstationnursery.co.uk
tel: 07725 049744 (Sarah Steel)
operations@theoldstationnursery.co.uk
tel: 07791 806502 (Rachel Attwood)
finance@theoldstationnursery.co.uk
tel: 01522 521758 (Jo Bowley)

OPERATIONS MANAGER UPDATE

I'd like to start by saying a huge thank you to Sarah, Emma, Jo and all of the Managers and their teams for making me feel so welcome at Old Station Nurseries. It's been a whirlwind first few weeks, but I've enjoyed every minute of it.

It's been both a fantastic opportunity and experience, being part of the Pilot EYFS Inspection Framework and the teams certainly made us all proud when the Ofsted Inspectors visited Linton-on Ouse and Innsworth. We had some really good feedback about the quality of provision that the nurseries are delivering, and a few good pointers to support our ongoing Quality Improvement Programme.

I'm often asked by parents why we do not teach the children to write. Our role as practitioners is to support emergent writing skills and help children to develop the techniques required to support writing, once they go to school. We do this in several ways. Throughout the day, children are offered lots of opportunities to make marks in gloop (cornflour and water.....if you haven't already tried this at home, you really should give it a go!) sand, and with paints, chinks, paintbrushes and water and light boards. All of these activities support fine manipulative skills and development pincer grip, the basic skills to being able to write.

With older children who demonstrate an interest in writing letters, the staff are on hand to support correct letter formation. We know that a lot of parents like to support and encourage their children to start to write, especially their own names, but may we please ask that if your child is writing at home, that you encourage letters to be written in lower case only. This will really support your child's transition to developing their writing skills, when they go to school.

I'm really looking forward to meeting many of you as I visit the nurseries, and always welcome any feedback.

Best wishes

Rachel Attwood

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

At last the nicer weather seems to be finally upon us!

We are starting to do our spring planting with the children in the garden. The children will be growing their own salad items, as well as carrots, leeks, spinach, beetroot, broccoli and parsnips!

In addition to planting we are also planning some Easter Activities. We will be having an Easter Bonnet competition and Egg Hunt on 5 April. If this isn't your child's normal day why don't you book them in to join in with the fun?

A big thank you, to all parents who recently attended our Parent Consultation Evening. I hope you found the opportunity to speak with your child's key person informative.

I would also like to thank the Preschool parents for their patience while we are still trying to sort out a replacement French Teacher. The company that provides us with our French lessons have been actively trying to recruit someone but to no avail. As soon as a new one is appointed permanently I will let you know, again please accept my apologies in the meantime.

This year we will be participating in a 'Toddle Waddle' for the Meningitis Trust on 22 May. The Meningitis Trust is a locally based charity and I'm sure you will agree a very worthwhile cause. We have been told that Monty the Duck will be coming to visit us!

We would all like to send Rebecca our best wishes for the arrival of her baby which is due at the end of April.

Finally we would like to start a Parent Group here at Innsworth. This will give parents the opportunity to bring ideas, suggestions or general feedback to the Nursery in an open discussion. Ideally we would like at least one representative from each of the children's rooms and would like to meet on a termly basis. If you are interested in becoming a representative please let me know by 30 April. We are planning to hold our first meeting sometime in May.

Best Wishes, Tracey

Diary Dates

April 5	Easter Bonnet Competition and Egg Hunt
April 6	Good Friday - Nursery Closed
April 9	Easter Monday – Nursery Closed
April 16	Back to Nursery for 'Grant Funded Only' and 'New for 2' children

May 7 May Day Holiday – Nursery Closed

May 22 Meningitis Trust Toddle Waddle

May 24 Preschool Leaver's Parent Consultation Evening

Babies

A big 'Welcome' - to Barnaby, Ava, Wilber and Jasmine who have started in Babies recently. Also a Happy Birthday to Sophie, Ava and Alfie who recently celebrated their birthdays and to Esmee and Alessio who have birthdays coming up.

The babies have recently been thoroughly enjoying nursery rhymes and musical instruments. We do a singing session with them everyday as this helps to promote communication and language. Their current favourites are Baa Baa Black Sheep, Humpty Dumpty and Tiny Tim. If you would like to sing these with your child at home and you don't know the words or actions to these songs please ask a member of staff. There is also a whole chapter of nursery rhymes in our book 'All Aboard' which we have on display in the reception area.

We are also currently doing lots of creative Easter themed activities with the children in preparation for our Easter Bonnet Competition and Egg Hunt.

We have also had some exciting news from Dominique, she is expecting her first baby in September, a big congratulations to her!

Michelle, Laura, Zoe and Dominique

Tots

We would like to welcome Jessica and Lucas who have recently started with us. We would like to wish Happy Birthday to Alessandro, Henry, Scarlet and Oliver.

You may have noticed New Communication passports in our room. The passports are divided into Key Groups and consist of simple detailed information about your children, these enables all staff to have an insight into your children's likes and dislikes etc.

There are some new 'WOW' vouchers with any Easter Theme, please fill these in with anything special your child has recently achieved so that we can share it.

We have introduced some new pockets outside the room. Each child has one and this is where you will find any correspondence or artwork in the future.

The children have been particularly interested in the outside world recently. They have been doing lots of digging in the garden for bugs. Henry, Maya, Austen, Jacklyn and Archie found a Woodlouse. We have also made a 'Bug Board' consisting of beetles,

butterflies, spiders, caterpillars and ants to encourage their interest to continue.

We have also begun to start some planting with the children, as well as vegetables we have planted some poppy seeds. We have also been busy painting daffodils for a display in our Art Area.

Hope you have a good Easter,

Amy, Hayley and Katie

Pre-School

Pre-School would like to welcome the children who joined us from tots during February; they are Allese, Imogen, Aimee and Ruben. Happy birthday 3rd to you all and happy 4th birthday to Elise and Olivia, whose birthdays are coming up soon! We have had some new children join us in the afternoon sessions, they are Louie, Joseph and Patricia; we have enjoyed meeting and making friends with you.

Lots of our pre-school children will be heading off to school in September. Once you know where this will be for your child, please let us know so that we can do our bit in making the transition as smooth and enjoyable as possible. We will be holding a Parent's Consultation Evening for these children in May, to talk about their learning and development so far with us and to anticipate what is yet to come as they embark on their school adventure.

We are trying to find exciting ways of getting you involved in your child's learning experience with us and find out about what they have been learning at home. You have been doing great with our pre-school animal mascots who have had lots of fun at each of your houses so far. They still have more homes to visit so don't worry if you haven't taken yours home yet!

We have also been working on the pre-school yearly learning journey, it is up on the wall above the coat pegs for you to have a look at and find out more about what we have been doing and where the children's ideas have taken us. You might even have some ideas related to what you've been doing at home, or perhaps that we haven't thought of yet!

We are taking full advantage of the glorious spring weather and are spending much more time out in the garden. The children love the new digging area however; we have had some days where we have got well and truly covered in mud. Please continue to allow us to explore in the garden by providing wellies and spare clothes for us to change into afterwards. The mud is proving to be an endless learning experience, we have been potting pansy seeds, searching for and counting wiggly worms and using the digging equipment to transport the mud around the garden! We have been talking about 'diggers' and safety in the garden, which the children have really taken on-board and enjoyed learning about.

You will soon notice 'pockets' hanging up outside the pre-school room. Each child will be allocated a named pocket for their invoices or correspondence to be placed into and any artwork. Please check these regularly although we will still be keeping you updated at hand-over times.

Amanda, Bev and Sam