



## THE OLD STATION NURSERY, WASPS 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**

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### 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 CLUB

It hardly seems possible that Christmas was that long ago and we are now busy at Wasps making plans for Easter!

The children have been involved in spring activities, making spring pictures and developing their creative skills. Many are aspiring artists and form some very interesting conversations whilst creating their pictures. At Wasps we feel these activities really develop their social and personal skills, sharing equipment and discussing everyday life around these topics are but a few which aid their learning while they play.

We have extended this learning with 'show and tell' on the carpet on a Monday. The younger children love to bring in things to show others. These have ranged from rat bones to a homemade motorised helicopter. All the children become engaged in this and the older ones ask questions on the items brought in. This has provided valuable learning experiences on a social and personal level and has resulted in some questioning and new knowledge gained.

Many children were interested in Lent and what it meant, as a result of making pancakes.

We enjoyed making Mother's Day cards and presents and now it is on to Easter cards, eggs and hunts.

WASPS continues to be busy with a longer waiting list which we are trying our best to accommodate for both parents and children who would really like to join us.

Next term we will be spending more time outdoors, weather permitting, and encouraging the children to be involved in more physical activities, including use of our parachute and games. Come on summer!

Michelle Godfrey  
Supervisor, WASPS