



THE OLD STATION NURSERY, WRAGBY ROAD 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 OFFICE

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. We have lots of exciting events planned over the next few months, so please do come and join us. I would also like to thank all those parents who came to our parents evening, we have received some lovely feed back, thank you.

On the 5th April we have our Easter bonnet competition and in the afternoon we will be having an Easter egg hunt. Times will be confirmed nearer to the event, so do come and join us. We will also be celebrating William and Kate's wedding anniversary on the 29th April and we will be having a royal tea party in our garden, weather permitting. This will take place from 3.00pm till 4.00pm and if your child would like to dress up for this event, then that would be lovely. You are all welcome to join us for tea!

As you have probably noticed, we are trying to encourage children to wear indoor shoes with in the nursery, to try and keep the floors clean and keep the dirt outside. Please could you provide your child with some appropriate foot wear, such as slippers or lightweight shoes which can be kept for indoors?

Thank you for your continuous support.

Alison

Tweenie Room

Hello and welcome to Charlie, Julie, Joseph, Summer, Ocean and Cohen all who have settled in really well and are part of our family.

Also we welcome James coming into Tweenies shortly and say good bye to Tori who will be joining pre-school. Another big change to Tweenies is that Tracy will be leaving at the end of March to go on maternity leave. Vicky will then be taking over as room leader with the support of Ian and Rebecca. If there are any concerns, please see Alison or Vicky.

We had great fun participating in the Healthy Body, Happy Me week; please see photos on our Facebook page to see some of the things we got up to.

Regards,
Tracy, Vicky and Ian

Baby Room

We have had a busy few months welcoming new children including Lacie –mai, Jessica, Archie and Jayden.

We've been getting very messy doing body painting, which the babies loved. They even liked painting us! The feel of paint is great for exploring their senses, especially for the little ones as they like the squelching of the paint between their fingers and toes.

An easy messy activity to try at home is playing with shaving foam; you can make marks in it using objects

or your fingers and it's so easy to clean away, a cloth and all the marks are gone.

The gardener will be visiting us at the end of March time to start the baby garden, look out for the changes in the next month.

We have made a song book for you to have a look at and take turns to take home and share with your child. We hope you enjoyed your first parents' evening. Thank you for all the lovely feed back and suggestions, for those of you who were unable to attend then you are welcome to arrange another time to speak to your child's key person and go through your child's learning journey.

Louisa, Jess and Natalie

Pre-school Notes

On the 23rd April you should be able to find out which school your child has been offered a place at. Please could you let me know (Heather) the outcome and if you need any support or advice as it is quite daunting for you and your child over the next few months? I will be working hard to contact the local schools to build good partnerships and to hopefully arrange some visits so your child can get used to the idea and a general layout of the area, also I will be getting in contact with your child's teacher to come and see your child in the nursery environment and I am hoping this will lead onto a small transition evening in the near future.

In May we will be having a multicultural afternoon inviting parents and carers from other countries to come and talk to the pre-school with photos, food and clothing so the children get to know about other cultures in the world. Please feel free to come along and join us.

Beth and I have re-introduced key group times doing planned activities based on your child's interests. In my group we have recently been learning about shapes and numbers. We have also planted some seeds and the children water them every day so hopefully we will see them grow. We are currently learning about time telling the time with the aid of Max the clever dog; he is not like other dogs as he has long legs and likes to learn! Lots of the children have been thoroughly engaged and have been learning lots.

I recently found a great Louis song book on the Birth To Five Service website, for doing with our puppet 'Louis'. We have been learning new songs which the children love singing with Louis and their friends. Do have a look at www.birthtofive.org.uk.

Heather and Beth