



# Westmill Nursery

Learning through play

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## APRIL & MAY 2010 NEWSLETTER

We hope you all had a lovely Easter break and not eaten too much chocolate – unlike ourselves!

### Feedback from Parent Consultation Evening

Thank you to all the parents who joined us and contributed to our development plan at the beginning of March. We hope that this gave you a little insight into how we plan for your child's early education as well as a night out! Thank you so much for all your kind compliments as well as your suggestions. We have given these considerable thought and implemented some improvements as a result.....

- Keyworkers will continue to make sure that settling-in arrangements are re-visited should a child become unsettled.
- The introduction of 'Gardener of the Day' as an additional responsibility.
- Lower Coat pegs for the children to gain increased independence.
- Mandy will be visiting feeder schools to aid a smoother transition for our leavers. With consent from individual schools she will put together a simple photo book of key things in their new setting. This will help children to be familiar with their new surroundings and talk through any concerns they have. This will be in addition to inviting prospective teachers into nursery.
- An information evening for new parents – this will be held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July for parents of children who will be joining us in September. We aim to cover essential information, i.e. the ethos of our nursery, how we plan, policies, routines, expectations, paperwork etc. This will allow parents and children to build relationships with their child's keyworker when they attend their settling-in sessions rather than spending time going through the above.
- A desire to visit nursery whilst 'in action' was a re-occurring comment that was received. We regularly include reminders in newsletters and plans and a parent helper rota on the parent notice board. We will also pop a note on our A-Board and via e-mail to ensure we reach all our parents. We have been very lucky this last half term to have had a lot more parents spend time with us. We hope you enjoyed it, as we certainly enjoyed having you!
- Parents contribution to Learning Journey's was discussed. As a child progresses into early education their learning continues to be most strongly influenced by the home, so it follows that the closer the links between parents and us, the more effective that learning becomes. To aid communication and recording of children's achievements parents agreed that they would prefer to note down achievements as and when they happened (rather than a termly feedback sheet). We have ordered some small record books for each child which will be sent home in the next couple of weeks with some guidelines. Thank you for your continued support as without this feedback we would not have known which method would best work for you.

### Sun Protection Policy

It will soon be that time of year again when the sun becomes stronger; to ensure that children remain safe in the sun we will be sending home a copy of our 'Sun Protection' Policy. Please complete the permission slip at the bottom of the policy and return to us with a NAMED bottle of sun lotion. Without permission unfortunately we will not be able to help your child apply their lotion. Thank you.

### The Rain doesn't stop us!



Splashing in puddles is definitely the best bit!

We experienced some horrible wet weather towards the end of term, but this didn't stop us visiting the lambs in the village. The children have really enjoyed this and we think that the sheep have also enjoyed listening to the children's rendition of 'baa baa black sheep' several times! We consider ourselves very lucky to be part of a safe and picturesque village with a wealth of exciting wildlife and things to see and do.

### Attendance in September

It is becoming more and more necessary to plan attendance in advance. Thank you to those of you who have replied to the letter sent out on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. If you have not replied please do so as soon as possible or if you would like an additional copy of the letter please ask. Just to let you know that if you have requested extra days for your child we will be in a position to allocated spaces at the end of May. To ensure that we operate a fair waiting list we allocate spaces on a 'first come first served' basis which also

applies to new children joining us. So if you would like your child to attend additional or extended sessions when they are entitled to nursery funding it is a good idea to get their name on the waiting list as soon as possible.

### Plant Stall – Donate seeds

If you have not had time to read our plans for this half term yet, just a reminder that we would appreciate a donation of a packet of seeds for the children to plant. We are hoping for a range of vegetables, flowers and herbs. Please bring these into nursery by Wed 28<sup>th</sup> April. If we are lucky enough to be over-run with young plants at the end of half term, we plan to hold a Plant Stall! so please do come along.

### Book People

Thank you to those parents who have ordered books through the 'Book People'. For every 10 books that are ordered the nursery receives a free book. Unfortunately if the money for your books is not in the envelope by the collection date, they are unable to leave your books.

### Do you know how to find out about Hertfordshire's Extended Services?

Children's Centres and extended schools provide access to a range of universal and preventative service which include:

- Free early years education
- Health advice, parent support & activities for families, children and young people
- Access to formal childcare
- Funded activities for vulnerable children and young people who are eligible for free school meals.
- Advice and support sessions about going back to work, or accessing training and adult learning.

If you would like to find out more just visit [www.hertsdirect.org/extendedservices](http://www.hertsdirect.org/extendedservices) and type in your postcode for services in your area.

### Rolling Snack

We continue to reflect on the children's learning environment and to enable them more time to experience 'freeplay' we have recently introduced a 'rolling snack' system on a trial basis. With this new system children are able to choose when they would like their snack, staff are available to support them with this and handwashing etc. It has worked well so far, making a smoother transition into small groups (chipmunks & penguins). Officers of the Day now help prepare the snack and load the lunchboxes into the fridges. We will see if this is the right system to continue for us as a group during this half term. We would love to hear any comments you have about this.

### Do you like Gardening?

This half term the children are going to be doing lots of planting to make their garden as interesting as possible. As multi-talented as we are, we do not confess to be the best gardeners! We would love to hear from you if you think you could offer us some advice. We have a small budget that needs to be spent wisely. Thank you.

### Closure – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May

Unfortunately we will have to close nursery on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May as the hall is required as a Polling Station for the general election which has just been called. Please accept our apologies, but this is out of our control.

### Parent Counter please!

Thank you for all the Sainsbury's and Tesco Vouchers you have donated. These are now stacking up and need to be counted into bundles. The job never seems to daunting if it is done periodically, we are looking for a parent/volunteer who would be willing to count these for us please. If you think you can help please speak to Louise. Thank you.

### Term Dates

These have now been set for 2010/11. A full copy of these can be seen on our website [www.westmillnursery.co.uk](http://www.westmillnursery.co.uk) by clicking on 'Parent Resources' then 'Helpful info'.

<b><u>SUMMER TERM 2010</u></b>	INSET DAY Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> April 2010  Term Begins - Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> April 2010 MAY BANK HOLIDAY – Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May CLOSED – Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> May Half Term - Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> May to Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> June Term Ends - Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2010
<b><u>AUTUMN TERM 2010</u></b>	INSET DAYS Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup> & Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> September  Term Begins - Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2010 Half Term - Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> October Term Ends - Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2010

Kindest regards

All the team at Westmill Nursery