



# Westmill Nursery

Learning through play

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# JANUARY 2010 NEWSLETTER

## Welcome.....

A warm welcome to Seth and Kaelyn who have joined us this term. We are sure they will settle well and enjoy their time with us!

## Welcome Back

We hope you all had a lovely Christmas and wish you a Happy New Year! It was lovely to nearly have a white Christmas, and the snow was certainly welcomed by the children who made it in on the last day of term - we had a wonderful time playing in the snow!

Forecaster predict that we haven't seen the last of the snow quiet yet so it makes sense to remind you of our 'emergency closure procedures' if you wake up to snow.

- 1) Please check the home page of our website [www.westmillnursery.co.uk](http://www.westmillnursery.co.uk) where a notice will be placed as soon as a decision has been made to close the nursery. We will endeavor to do this by 8am.
- 2) If you do not have access to the internet, please call Lorraine on 07791 170416 after 8am, where she will be able to let you know if we plan to close.

## Wrap up Warm!

As it is especially cold at the moment we ask that you make sure you send your child to nursery in several layers, a warm coat, hat and pair of gloves – all NAMED please! Most children are still keen to go outside, but their little hands get ever so cold very quickly.

We are very grateful for our new heating system this winter, it is much warmer than recent years but it is still important to wear several layers while it is particularly cold. Thank you for your help.

## Thank you, thank you, thank you!

For our lovely Christmas gifts at the end of term, they were very gratefully received. We are certainly enjoying sharing our chocolate goodies into the New Year!

It was a very good turn-out for our Christmas concert, and great to see so many daddies and granddads take some time out to enjoy the festivities. We were very proud of all our children who sang beautifully and also had the confidence to add their own interpretation to the nativity. Unfortunately we were all so busy that we did not have a chance to take any photos of the children for our scrap book and files. If you have any photo's (we are not looking for David Bailey quality) please please email them to us, [westmillnursery@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:westmillnursery@tiscali.co.uk). Thank you very much.

Our Christmas raffle raised a fantastic £200! Thank you all so much for your generous donations which were made into several hampers. Also thank you to Phili (Carla's mummy) for a gorgeous Christmas cake and Kelly (Oliver's mummy) for the donation of a beauty voucher.

We will add this money to the £54 from photography taken in October and £60 raised from the reproduction of the children's art into Christmas cards. We have taken notice of the children's requests and have ordered some ride-on double tricycles for them to enjoy.

A total of £81 was sent to the Children's Ward (C3) at Addenbrookes Hospital as a result of your kind donations and Christmas messages, replacing Christmas cards this year. We were really pleased how this went and plan to repeat this again next year. Addenbrookes had a very long 'wish' list of toys for children on their ward; they have been able to put this donation to good use in purchasing some. Thank you again.

## Annual Parent Questionnaire

If you are receiving this newsletter in a paper format please find attached our annual parent questionnaire. If you are receiving this electronically a questionnaire will be sent home with your child. Your responses will help us understand what we can do to improve the service we offer to you and your child/ren. We would appreciate it if you could take a few moments to complete it and return

either in your child's book bag or anonymously in the box on top of the wooden lockers by **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January**. Thank you for your support.

### More Space for us!

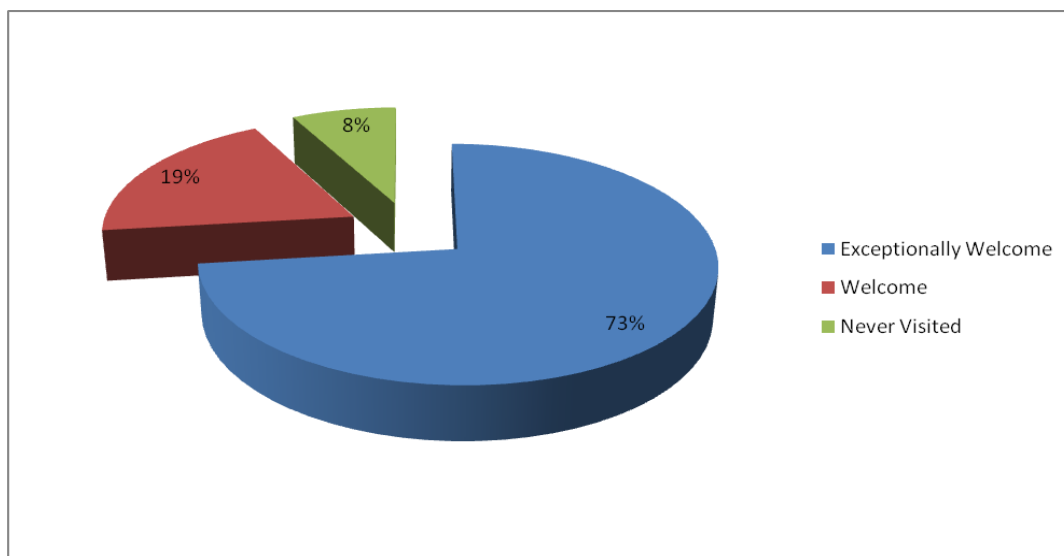
At last we have more storage! and very grateful to the T & M Greg Trust for supporting our plans. We now own a proportion of the large building (which we have named the barn) just past the hall. You may have seen this being constructed and wondered what was going on.

This extra off-site storage space has enabled us to increase our garden space as we have taken down our existing shed and replaced it with a much smaller one which just now houses outside equipment. We are all enjoying this extra space and are now also able to use our garden in all weathers. The awning is now fully operational and will provide cover during our fantastic British weather!

### Engaging Fathers Research

I would personally like to thank all the fathers who filled in my questionnaire at the beginning of November to support my research for my Degree. A majority of you found a few moments to not only answer the questions, but to add such valuable compliments and comments. Just to remind you, I carried an investigation into the key barriers that prevent fathers and practitioners engagement. The other methods of research used were an audit of attendance and interviews with colleagues.

The investigation identified that the main key barrier was father's work commitments preventing them from attending nursery. It was pleasing to note that 73% of fathers felt that we make them feel exceptionally welcome.



Pie Chart displays how welcome fathers feel when they visit nursery

The results have also highlighted areas of improvement for the nursery to support fathers to engage. This year we will consider ways in which we can engage fathers outside our normal opening hours, possibly in conjunction with Bramble Hill Children's Centre. I will raise this matter at the next governance meeting in a few weeks time and let you know of any future plans.

Please remember that fathers, grandfathers, uncle's, auntie's etc etc. are more than welcome to join us for a session or part of (we are not scary ladies!) All volunteers are accompanied by a member of staff at all times and never left alone with children, we also ask that they acknowledge our confidentiality policy. Should you wish to become a regular volunteer, (more than 4 times a month) from July you will be required to register with the new Vetting and Barring Scheme giving you a 'unique identification number'. This will enable you to volunteer with any organisation registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

If you would like to see a copy of my full research report, please ask and I will be happy to show you.

Thanks. Lorraine

## Development Plan

We continue to review our practice to ensure we meet government requirements and children's needs. We thought that you would be interested to hear about a couple of improvements we have recently introduced.

### Continued Resource Provision Record

The purpose of this record is to ensure that we provide the resources that are either requested by the children or best suit the children's learning needs and interests. We have been using this since the beginning of November and it is working well. We have found that particular resources are very popular so will be out more often, sometimes all week. This allows the children to explore and learn how to use it, or use it in a different way to stimulate their learning. Staff keep an ongoing record which is updated regularly throughout the session. The Pop-up-pirate seems to be the favorite at the moment – so please don't be surprised if you see it out every day!

### Assessing Children's Achievements

The Early Years Foundation Stage guidelines suggests that children need to *consistently* achieve each 'development matters' goal before moving onto the next one. For this reason, only when we have observed a child achieve the goal a minimum of *three* times we will move them onto the next one. This will mean that children will take a lot longer to work through the curriculum and their next steps, but also ensures that their learning is embedded. Please do speak to your child's keyworker if you have any questions about this or anything else!

## Uniform

Just to let you know that we do stock a size 26" polo and sweatshirt if you would like to purchase a larger size for your child. These remain at the usual price of £5.25 for the polo and £7.00 for the sweatshirt.



## Westmill Nursery is Going Green!



Our current recycling topic has prompted us to review our sustainability by prompting and developing our current range of 'green' initiatives, progressively covering all areas of the nursery.

- **Energy Efficiency**  
Developing climate conscious programmes and equipment which are energy efficient and environmentally friendly.
- **Nursery Activity**  
Inspiring and encouraging our staff and children to both initiate and take part in activities that allow them to gain an understanding as well as an appreciation of looking after our planet today and for tomorrow.
- **Product Disposal and Re-use**  
Ethical disposal of all products wherever possible and redistribution of selected items to extend their useful life.
- **Recycling**  
Promoting recycling schemes that involve the children at an early age, re-enforcing the importance of a greener future.

## Westmill Nursery is investing in a green future

If you currently receive communication from us in paper format... Please consider receiving it electronically. Not only will you be kept up to date quicker, but will also be doing your bit to save the environment and reduce the nursery's administration costs, allowing us to keep our fees at the same level for a longer period. Please email Lorraine your email address at [westmillnursery@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:westmillnursery@tiscali.co.uk) to be added to our list. Thank you very much.

Kindest regards

All the team at Westmill Nursery