



Westmill Nursery

Learning through play

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NOVEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

A Lovely Afternoon Tea

It was lovely to see so many parents joining us for Afternoon Tea last Friday. An amazing turnout! We hope that you enjoyed getting to know other parents, chatting with staff and browsing through your child's learning journey. Thank you also to Lyn Herbert from Bramble Hill Children's Centre who helped out and brought lots of information about sessions run by the Children's Centre. We hope to host 'Afternoon Tea' every term, look out for the date next year!



parents & children get stuck into playdough



Mandy makes a good cup of tea!

"wash those dirty hands"

Thorough hand washing is becoming more and more important to reduce the risk of bugs being transferred, particularly at this time of year. To make this fun we have just introduced a short song for the children to sing whilst washing their hands. We thought that you may also like to use this at home.



(To the tune of 'wind the bobbin up')

Wash your hands with soap
Wash your hands with soap
Rinse, rinse dry dry dry

First wet your hands then add some soap
Rub it all around, see the bubbles float
Give your hands a rinse then pat them dry
It's easy when you give it a try

May we also remind you that if your child has experienced a bout of sickness and diarrhea it is important that they do not return to nursery until 48 hours after the last episode. This will minimise the risk of any bugs spreading which can happen very quickly amongst both children and staff. Thank you and happy handwashing!

Emergency Closure Policy

Unfortunately it's that time of year again when the weather usually takes a turn for the worst and presents us with white fluffy snow overnight and icy roads at some point! We do have a procedure in place should it be necessary to close nursery. Please find attached to this email a copy of our emergency policy policy clearly stating what you should do if you wake up to snow and are unsure if nursery will be open or if we experience snowfall during a session. Please keep this policy handy or a copy can be found on our website www.westmillnursery.co.uk Thank you.

Parent Helpers

Just a reminder that parent helpers are always very welcome to come and join us for part or whole sessions once your child has settled in. Please speak to your child's keyworker if you are unsure. There are two particular dates that we would love parents to help out, one is Friday 9th December, to help make mince pies and Wed 7th December, one of our Christmas Parties.

Parents who have joined us previously have said how much they have enjoyed it and particularly joining in on some of the experiences their child does! If you are interested please pop your name on the parent's helper rota on the notice board or drop Lorraine an email, westmillnursery@tiscali.co.uk. Many thanks.

Yoghurts in pots please

If your child enjoys a yoghurt at lunchtime we ask that these are the ones in pots please, you don't need to supply a spoon as we have plenty. We find that children become increasingly frustrated not being able to squeeze all the yoghurt out then most of it ends up down their top! Lunchtimes are a learning experience for the children and we believe learning to correctly use a spoon is one of them. Thank you for your understanding.

Children in Need



Please support our

'Show your spots' Cake Bake on Friday 18th November at 1.20pm

We would appreciate any cake donations for our stall on the morning of the cake bake or bring these with you when you come to buy. Don't forget to bring your purse and friends! All money raised will go to Children in Need.

Do you know about the Book People?

The 'Book People' periodically deliver a fantastic range of books at dramatically reduced prices to those found in shops. A sample of each book is left at nursery for you to look through and place an order should you wish you. All money needs to be in the order envelope with the books on collection day. When the samples are collected your order is also delivered at the same time!

Thank you to those parents who have ordered books in the past. 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.

Mmmmm..... we all love playdough

A lot of parents have expressed an interest in knowing how we make our playdough at nursery, so here is the recipe below should you wish to have a go at home. There are lots of different methods of making dough all just slightly different but we have been using this one for years successfully. Enjoy!

LONG LIFE PLAYDOUGH RECIPE

- 2 cups salt
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 pint boiling water
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 tablespoon cream of tartar
- Food colouring



METHOD

- 1) Mix together the salt and flour in a large mix bowl.
- 2) Add cream of tartar
- 3) Measure out boiling water – put oil and few drops of food colouring into the water
- 4) Slowly add approx. a quarter of the boiling water mixture into the dry ingredients and mix with a spoon.
- 5) Continue to add the water slowly, stirring all the time.
- 6) Once it gets to thick to mix with spoon, mix and knead together with hands.
- 7) Continue to knead as long as possible. The more you knead the better the playdough!
- 8) If it is too sticky just add a little flour, if it is too dry add a drop of boiling water.
- 9) ENJOY!
- 10) Make sure it is stored in an airtight container after use. It can be kept for approx. 3-4 weeks.

STOP! NO CHRISTMAS CARDS THANK YOU!

Over the last few years we have run very successful 'Christmas Wishes' campaign that have not only raised over £150 for local hospitals, but also saved the environment! So this year we would like to do the same, but for **The Sick Children's Trust** who provide accommodation for parents to be closeby to their seriously children whilst in intensive care or special care baby unit. It is likely that you may know someone who has benefited from the amazing service that **The Sick Children's Trust** provides.



Please encourage your child to write a 'Christmas Wish' to their friends and us on the sticky labels which will be sent home from 28th November and return to us in an envelope with a donation. Labels will be displayed on our 'Happy Snowman' in nursery. Please do help yourself to extra labels on top of the drawers within nursery. Thank you.

Christmas is on it's way!



We can't believe Christmas is on it's way! and plans are well underway to treat the children to at least one Christmas party and take part in our concerts at the end of term. Further details of these will be sent home in the next couple of weeks.

We will be putting together some fantastic Christmas food & drink hampers to raffle this year. As always we are dependent on your kind donations of items for these hampers.

There are some great offers in the supermarkets at the moment for buy one get one free goodies. Please would you consider donating the free one to nursery next time you go shopping? We will begin collecting these in nursery from **Monday 28th November**; however you are very welcome to bring things in before if they are too tempting to have at home! A list will be put up on the parent notice board of suggested items for hampers and we would really appreciate it if you could put your name against one of them.

Raffle tickets will go on sale from 28th November, again a separate letter will be sent home. The money raised from the raffle will go towards developing a storytelling area in our Secret Garden.

Thank you for your support

Art Projects for schools Christmas Cards



HUGE thank you to everyone who ordered these lovely cards that the children individually worked so hard on. These are now in the safe hands of the printers and will be distributed as soon as we get them back. An amazing £76 was raised for nursery which will be invested in the Secret Garden.

What does The Family Information Service offer?

The Family Information Service provides free, friendly impartial information/guidance on a full range of childcare, children's services and resources across Hertfordshire.

FIS aims to offer you the most up-to-date information available in your area for children and young people aged 0 - 19 yrs (0 - 25 with a special need or disability):

- Looking for childcare and children's services?
- Do you need any help, advice or details of local childminders?
- Are you looking for leisure activities to do with your children?
- Free nursery places - Where can you find out more?
- Where can you get details of parent support organisations?

Please take a look at their new website www.hertsdirect.org/fis

News from



Bramble Hill Children's Centre

Bramble Hill Children's Centre is based in Mill Close in Buntingford and our main purpose is to offer access to services for children under 5 and their families. This includes support for parents and carers, outreach services, child health services, links with Jobcentre Plus and local colleges, children's activities and a range of information and advice.

The Children's Centre building is an extension to the Seth Ward Community Centre. We now have a designated meeting room where we can hold small sessions as well as an office and baby changing facilities.

The Children's Centre has four permanent members of staff; Mandy Sims who is the Children's Centre Manager, Lynn Herbert - Outreach Worker, Sam Lemay - Administrator and Sarah Davis - Early Years Play Worker. We also have two volunteers who kindly donate their time to help with our regular term time activities.

The regular activities we run for under 5s are during term time only. These are detailed below. We also run different activities during the school holidays.

If you would like to be included on our mailing list and receive regular updates from the Children's Centre please call us on 01763 273008 or email bramblehill@ymcacentralherts.org.uk.

Regular Term Time Activities

Stretch n Grow(physical activity session), Mondays 10am - 10.45am for walkers to 2 years and 10.45-11.30am for 2 years upwards (for those with 2 children please come to the second session. Held at Seth Ward Community Centre, Buntingford. £2 per family.

Stay & Play, Mondays 1.30pm - 3pm. Stay & Play session at Jenyns First School and Nursery, Braughing. £1 per family.

Under 1s Group, Tuesdays 10am - 11am. Held at Buntingford Bowls Club, Wyddial Road, Buntingford. £1 per family.

Musical Minis, Tuesdays 1.30pm - 2.30pm. £2 per family. Held at Seth Ward Community Centre, Buntingford.

Story Sacks, Wednesdays 10am - 11am at Jenyns First School and Nursery, Braughing. £1 per child.

Jumping Jacks Stay & Play, Thursdays 9.45am - 11am. Stay & Play session at the Herts County Guide Headquarters, Cottered. £1 per family.

Rhyme Time, Fridays 10am - 11am. Held in at Seth Ward Community Centre, Buntingford. £1 for first child and 50p each for other children.

Drop-in Breastfeeding Support Group, Fridays 11am - 12noon at Bramble Hill Children's Centre, Buntingford. Free. Led by the health visiting team - Ros & Wendi in Puckeridge - 01920 822018 & Jill in Buntingford - 01763 271763.

Dad's/Male Carers Group, 3rd Saturday in each month, 10am - 11.30am. Held at Buntings Nursery, Station Road, Buntingford. £1 per child.

www.bramblehillchildrenscentre.org.uk

Next week, 14th to 18th November is **Early Talk Awareness Week** Bramble Hill's classes will have a focus on communication in their sessions and are happy to help with any queries you have around communication. If you can't make it along to any of their sessions there are some DVD's that they are

kindly lending us with lots of practical ideas on how you can help your child's communication at home. Please ask Mandy Sweet if you would like to borrow one of these.

Childcare Voucher Scheme

If you are still considering and have the option to use a childcare voucher scheme via your employer, please do let us know in advance to allow us to register with the relevant company if we haven't done so already. There are many different companies all offering a slightly different registration and redemption procedure. Thank you in advance.



Coffee Morning

On **Thursday 24th November from 10am** a **Coffee Morning** is kindly being held by Nadine Cordell at **Cheynes Coach House, Cottered, SG9 9PZ** (Tel: 01763 281020). Please do go along with a friend to enjoy Homemade Cakes, Tea, Coffee and a Raffle. All money raised will go towards 'Jakes Journey' a trust fund set up to support Lorraine's son who was diagnosed with a brain tumour in December 2010.

Nadine is also a phoenix card representative and 10% of any phoenix products will also go towards Jakes Journey. You can view a good selection of cards on her website <http://www.phoenix-trading.eu/web/nadinecordell>. Thank you so much for your support.

Dates for your Diary

Children in Need - Show your Spots' cake bake	18 th November at 1.20pm
Christmas Party Food List available	24 th November
Christmas Raffle Tickets go on sale	28 th November
Collection of Hamper items begins	28 th November
Christmas Party No. 1	5 th December
Christmas Party No. 2	7 th December
Christmas Concert No. 1	13 th December
Christmas Concert No. 2	15 th December
End of Term	16 th December
INSET Day	3rd January 2012
Beginning of Spring Term	4 th January 2012

Kindest regards

All the team at Westmill Nursery