



# Woodham Mortimer Pre-School

Newsletter February 2012

Pre-School Mobile Number: 07742 228077

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back, we hope you have had a fun filled half term holiday!

This term we welcome Hayden Reid, Cian Devlin, John Johnson, Chloe Prime, Francis Cross, Henry Cross, Joshua Tyler and Emily Dodge. We wish the children and their family's happy times with us.

A huge big thank you to all of the Grandparents who came to visit us during Grandparents' Week, we were visited by: Sophie's Nan Ann, Sam's Grandparents Jill and Trevor, Ayse's Grandparents Lynda and Colin, Monty's Grandparents Barbara and Ivor, Poppy's Grandparents Barbara, Jean and Bill, George's Nan Rita and Freya's Grandparents Kathy and Fred. The children had a fantastic time playing in the snow, talking to our visitors, involving them in their games and having new faces to see. Special thanks to George's Nan who brought in cakes, complete with icing and decorations, for all of the children to decorate and to Sam's Grandparents, who encouraged the children's water colour painting skills by copying a painting Sam's Grandad had done, we were amazed by the results as were many of the parents who asked the staff who had done them, what talented children we have!

We can't wait until Dad's Week next term (14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> May). We know that it is often harder for Dad's to come to Pre-school during the working week but we would love to be joined by as many as possible, the children will love it!

Congratulations to Janice who following completion of her BA Early Childhood Studies has also now passed Early Years Professional Status! The following link explains what the status is and the benefits it can have to the Pre-school <http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/early-years/graduate-leaders-in-early-years/eyps-explained>

## Term Dates

*Spring Term 2012:* 3rd January – 29th March

*Summer Term 2012:* 23rd April - 19th July

The pre-school will be **closed** on the following days:

*Inset training:* **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February**, Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June

*Summer Half Term:* 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> June

*Cleaning days* Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March, Friday 20th July

## Important Dates

Easter Church Service: Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 12.30

Easter Egg Hunt at Woodham Mortimer Rectory: Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April 11 o'clock

Dads' Week: 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> May

Parents Evening: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 6.30 to 8.30

Pre-School Summer Fete Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012

## Summer Sessions

We have been delighted to see many new starters this term and we have several more waiting to start after Easter. This will mean a busy and lively pre-school throughout the summer term. However, sadly this summer will see us lose 21 of our children to big school so we do rely on this influx of youngsters to sustain the preschool. Before allocating further places to many interested families, we would like to ensure that we accommodate any additional session requests from you. Normally this would be done just before Easter, however due to the current high demand for places, if you would like to change (increase, decrease or switch!) your sessions from April to July please let Jenny Shaw ([wmps@jennyshaw.co.uk](mailto:wmps@jennyshaw.co.uk) or 01621 843459) know before 1st March 2012. We may not be able to accommodate requests made after this time.

Do remember that our Tuesday and Thursday afternoons are specifically tailored to the 3+ age group and if your child has recently had their third birthday you may wish to take up these sessions. Thank you.

### **Last Half Term**

The children started off the last term talking about their Christmas celebrations; thank you for sending in the Christmas Memories, this gave a great source of conversation at circle time when the children shared their memories and photos. The children really enjoyed the story books we have looked at; we are now regularly acting out the Enormous Turnip. The Three Billy Goats Gruff finger puppets were shared beautifully during story time as we told the story. The children also listened to this story on a story tape one lunch club; this must win the prize for the quietest lunch club ever as they became so engrossed in the story and forgot to talk! Our Chinese New Year dragon dance was a big success as were the noodles and prawn crackers the children had for snack. An unexpected event happened with the fall of the snow; we had a wonderful time building snowmen, making snow angels, having snow balls fights and following the tiny footprints we found and trying to work out which animal could have made them. What better way for the children to learn about winter, cold, ice, melting and the natural world. This came after the children had already experienced rain, hail and what happens when you splash in puddles.

### **Topics for this half term**

Following the children's continued interest in stories, we will start the half term off with the story Jack and the Beanstalk, as well as discussing the story the children will be planting beans and playing with baked beans in the messy tray. We will move onto a topic of our family as we look towards Mothers' Day, we would welcome a photo of the children taken with their family or a special person to share with their friends. The half term will end with the topic of Easter, Rev'd Stephanie will be coming in to talk about the Easter story and will be holding a Pre-school Easter Service on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March at 12.30 at Woodham Mortimer Church, all parents, children and other family members are welcome to attend. Rev'd Stephanie has asked that the children come complete with an Easter Bonnet to wear, we will be making very basic hats for the children to wear however if you would like to help your child to make a hat at home please feel free to come wearing this instead. The service will as usual last for around 20 minutes and will be very child friendly, this time including decorating cakes! Rev'd Stephanie has also invited the Pre-school children with their families to a Easter Egg Hunt held in the Rectory grounds on Easter Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April at 11 o'clock.

Date	Topic	Letter of the Week
20 <sup>th</sup> February	Jack and the Beanstalk	U
27 <sup>th</sup> February	Jack and the Beanstalk	V
5 <sup>th</sup> March	Our Family	W
12 <sup>th</sup> March	Our Family	X
19 <sup>th</sup> March	Easter	Y
26 <sup>th</sup> March	Easter	Z

### **Training**

Jenny completed the final day of her Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator Course. Jenny also attended an Equality Named Co-ordinator Course and now takes over this role with Janice as Deputy. The role as the ENCO will be to help promote, co-ordinate and monitor equality of opportunity for children and their families in the setting. You will all receive a letter inviting you all to join an equality working group. Please let Jenny G know if you are interested in joining. The Equality Working Group will be set up for parents, staff and other people linked to the pre-school. The group will give you the opportunity to give your ideas and opinions on how Woodham Mortimer Pre-school can improve being an inclusive setting.

### **Learning Journey Books**

We hope you have enjoyed looking through your child's Learning Journey Book; these books will again be displayed on the brown table just inside the entrance to the main hall on the right hand side, please feel free to look through them. They are updated regularly and will include new contents each time they are displayed. If you wish to take them home to look through please talk to your key person first, these books are very precious to your key person whilst your child is at Pre-school, your key person dedicates many hours of work (much of which is unpaid) to completing them, they would not be able to be replaced if they are spoilt or lost. The order of display is in key person order:

20/2 Susan, 27/2 Julia, 3/5 Caroline, 12/3 Alison & Frances, 19/3 Jenny, 26/3 Janice

## Show and Share and Topic Table

Following a review of the tables by the entrance door we have now introduced a larger show and share box. Show and share is becoming a really popular activity which has outgrown our old basket; thank you for encouraging your children to take part in this. The new box will be housed on the table in front of the kitchen hatch, please place all items brought into Pre-school into this box. Polite request - We have had a number of instances where children have kept items from home with them and subsequently lost them during the session, resulting in staff needing to search through items already packed away. This also causes an issue as all activities are risk assessed before the children enter pre-school, to ensure that they are age appropriate and safe for the children to use, if children are taking their own toys into Pre-school with them they have not been risk assessed and could present a danger to the children, this is particularly important as we have many two years olds at Pre-school.

There is also a new orange pop up container to contain the children's blankets or other comforters and any clothes the children take off during the session, please feel free to place these items in here at the beginning of the session. A further box will contain the children's art work made during the session.

If your children has something to show connected to our topic please place it on the topic table, in front of the blue display board. The blue and white screen used by the children during the session to display their work will also now include photos of what we have been doing during the previous half term, please feel free to take a look.

## Illness

Please can you keep your child at home if they are generally unwell to prevent staff and other children becoming ill (cold, cough, sore throat, high temperature, infection or illness). Details of other illnesses and the period of exclusion from Pre-school are shown in the following link

[http://www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebFile/HPAweb\\_C/1194947358374](http://www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1194947358374). Please also inform the Pre-School as to the nature of any infection / illness your child has so that we can alert other parents / carers if necessary. Please note children who have been vomiting or had diarrhoea should not come into Pre-school until **48 hours** has elapsed since the last attack. Children must be kept away from pre-school for **48 hours** from the start of taking antibiotics or other medication (even if they have had it before) in case of allergic reaction.

## Outdoor Play

At Woodham Mortimer Pre-school we firmly believe in the benefits to children of playing outside whatever the weather. Whilst the weather remains cold please ensure that your child has a named, warm coat, gloves, hat and a pair of named wellington boots to change into. If the weather is rainy or wet please ensure that they have a named waterproof jacket. We would also appreciate a spare set of clothes in their bags to change into should their clothes get wet. Many children have been bringing in waterproof trousers for outdoor play, this is a really good idea and we are happy to help the children put them on.

## Car Park Barrier

During pick up, cars parked at the road side cause a hazard to pedestrians and the children. A temporary fence is placed across the car park entrance to ensure the safety of the children during the session. The staff do not remove the barrier at the end of the session as this would result in your children being left under supervised. Providing the children are not in the outdoor area, could we please encourage those arriving first to roll back the temporary fence to enable everyone to park safely in the car park; it is a huge benefit having dedicated parking, please use it.

## Collecting your children

We have a password system in place to ensure that people collecting children are easily identifiable to the staff; please ensure that **all** people collecting your child are aware of your password. Please also bear in mind that even if the person collecting is known to some of the staff, if they are not known to the member of staff at the entrance door, entrance to the hall will not be allowed, until they have been identified. We also have a list of people authorised to collect the children, if you would like to add another person to your list, or to change or be reminded of your password, please talk to Janice or Jenny.

Thank you for your continued support.

Woodham Mortimer Staff Team