



# February 2017

## Newsletter

**Toy Box Day Nursery & Pre-School**

**Dear Parents/Carers,**

Welcome to our February newsletter bringing you up to date with events here at Toy Box.

All the fuss and excitement leading up to Christmas and New Year now feels like a distant memory. Nursery life has returned to its normal routine with the children all getting down to the serious business of play on a daily basis.

### **Pre-School and Baby Room Activities**

As its Chinese New Year the babies have had fun both tasting and playing with noodles. They have also had lots of messy play, mark making in shaving foam as well as rolling balls down cardboard tubes and chasing them as they come out the other end.

The Pre-School children have also been celebrating Chinese New Year with lots of role play. Staff set out all the resources so the children could explore for themselves. They had great fun setting up a pretend Chinese restaurant and trying to pick up noodles with chop sticks. They have also been carrying out Dough Gym sessions with the playdough and exploring arctic animals in ice.

To celebrate Chinese New Year all the children had sweet and sour for lunch last Friday.

**Our Rhyme of the Month for the Babies is: "Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes"**

**Our Rhyme of the Month for the Pre-School is: "House of the Bears"**

**Our Book of the Month for the Pre-School is: "Goldilocks & the Three Bears"**

### **Valentine's Dress-Up Day – Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February**

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February we are inviting all the children who would normally attend nursery on that day to come to nursery wearing something red or pink. This has been a nursery tradition for the past few years and the event is usually well supported by parents/ carers, children and staff.

Throughout the day the children in both rooms will be making Valentine cards and baking tasty treats to take home in the evening.

## **Pancake Day – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February**

On Pancake Day, Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February, the children will have pancakes with a variety of toppings for their snack. Staff usually take advantage of the occasion to carry out taste testing sessions with the children. Afterwards the children will partake in discussions about the different tastes they experienced and what their favourite toppings were.

### **Drop Off and Pick Up Times**

If your child is booked in for an early session and is due to start nursery at 7.30 am please do not expect to be allowed into the building before that time. Staff arrive at nursery well before 7.30 am but then have to carry out our full risk assessments each morning before any of our children or parents/ carers enter the building. Once all these assessments have been carried out they are then ready to open the doors at 7.30 am to allow parents/ carers/ children to enter if they have been booked in for a pre-booked early start.

Similarly if your child is booked in to start at 8.00 am or even 1.00 pm they cannot be allowed to enter the building before that time. As you can imagine we have to stick to strict staffing ratios and as staff start and finish different shifts within these time periods we have to ensure we have the correct number of staff in the building at all times. We also have to think about the total number of children allowed within the nursery at any one time. This is especially important at 1.00 pm when our morning and afternoon sessions cross over. If a child arrives earlier than expected at the beginning of their afternoon session and other children are still here at the end of their morning session, the two will cross over. This in turn has an immediate effect on the total number of children in the building and could invalidate our insurance policy not to mention what OFSTED would have to say about it should they happen to drop in.

Please bear this in mind if a member of staff asks you to stay with your child until their allocated session starts. Staff have to adhere to guidelines as well as policies and procedures so please do not get upset with them for adhering to the guidelines.

I would also like to draw parents/ carers' attention to the fact that our morning session finishes at 1.00 pm and our nursery closes on an evening at 6.00 pm. If you arrive at nursery at 6.00 pm then staff still have to give you full feedback on your child/ children's day it can mean that staff can still be here until 6.30 pm. This is really not acceptable as some of our staff have to catch two busses to get home. If they miss the first bus it can mean that they do not get home until very late in the evening. So could I respectfully request that parents/ carers heed our start and finish times and arrive on time before the end of their child's session in order to allow our staff enough time to give you full feedback on your child/ children's day.

I would also like to remind all parents/ carers that there is a late pick up fee, charged at an extra £5.00 for every 10 minutes or part there of. This applies to both the children who should be picked up at 1.00 pm and 6.00 pm respectively. The fee applies to all late pick ups.

Thank you to all our parent/ carers who always respect our picking up and dropping off times. Your co-operation is very much appreciated.

## **World Book Day Dress up Day – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

To celebrate and mark the occasion of World Book Day on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March we are asking all the children who would normally attend nursery on that day to choose their favourite character either from a book or a nursery rhyme. They can then choose a book from home or from nursery and come to nursery on the day dressed up as their favourite character.

Please do not go to any expense buying materials for costumes. The children themselves are hugely imaginative and given a few basic resources, can come up with some very creative designs.

However, should any parent/ carer like assistance with ideas or inspiration please speak to any member of staff and they will be delighted to help.

## **Extra Session Requests and Change of Sessions**

We regularly have requests from parent/ carers about extra or permanent changes to sessions.

As well as ensuring that your requests are granted and to make managing these requests easier, could I ask that in future, all requests are made in writing.

If the manager is not available the letter can be handed to any member of staff who will then ensure it is handed to Helen.

## **Sale of Children's Fleeces and Sweatshirts**

We have a number of children's fleeces and sweatshirts which we are selling off at discounted prices. Unfortunately take up of the uniform has not been great and the items are taking up valuable space. The sizes are varied and will be sold on a first come first served basis.

If any parents/ carers are interested please let Helen know and she will check if we have the size you request.

Fleeces are being sold for £6.50 and sweatshirts £4.50. Both the fleeces and sweatshirts are good quality and wash really well.

## **Staff Changes**

I'm sure everyone is well aware by now that Anna has had to start her maternity leave far earlier than she wanted to. Being the trooper that she is she had wanted to continue for at least another month, but mother nature and her doctor dictated otherwise.

Anna is now enjoying a well earned rest, getting ready for her big event. We wish her all the best and look forward to meeting her new baby when she arrives.

During Anna's absence Helen is taking over the role of Manager. Helen has been working and preparing for the role under Anna's guidance for the past six months. She has taken to the role like a duck to water and is excited about the challenge it offers. So far she is doing great and thoroughly enjoying the experience.

Whilst Helen is covering for Anna during her maternity leave, Kylie is taking over leadership of the Baby Room from Helen. This is not such a big change for Kylie as she is used to leading the baby room in Helen's absence. Kylie too is doing a great job and keeps everything running smoothly in the baby room.

So well done to both Helen and Kylie. I'm sure you will both continue to excel in your new roles.

### **Staff Member of the Month**

The winner of staff member of the month for January is Vikki Kendall.

Well done and congratulations to Vikki who will now receive a £20 gift voucher of her choice.

Thank you also to all parents/ carers who took the time to vote. It means a lot to all the staff that their efforts are recognised and appreciated.

There are always voting slips available in the lobby for parents/ carers to fill in and pop into the basket.

In order to make voting more convenient we attach a voting slip to the newsletter each month. You can either print this off at home and bring it in or fill it in online and email it to the office so we can pop it into the basket for you.

### **Birthdays**

Throughout February we would like to wish a big "Happy Birthday" to the following children.

Finley H - 2 years old  
Henry K - 3 years old  
Riley W - 4 years old  
Leah I - 4 years old  
Joseph S - 4 years old

### **Dates for your Diary**

Valentine's Dress-Up Day - Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February  
Pancake Day - Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February  
World Book Day Dress-Up Day - Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March

### **And Finally**

As always a big thank you to all parents/ carers for your continuing support. All your suggestions and input are always welcome and taken seriously. If, however, you do have any queries or worries about any aspect of your child/ children's care or daily routine while at nursery please do not hesitate to speak to Helen and she will be delighted to address any queries you may have and to reassure you.

**Noreen, Helen and all the staff at Toy Box Day Nursery**