

Playgroup News

Goodbye and Hello!

What a busy summer term we have had and a successful theme with the castles and fairytales and more recently the life cycle of caterpillars to butterflies. It has been so hot this month, that the caterpillars didn't stay for long in their cocoon, quickly transforming and emerging as beautiful butterflies which we let out into the big wide world last week. You may see them in your garden, say hello from us!

At the end of this term, we will be saying goodbye to lots of 'our' current children, 30 in fact! Some will be moving on to a nursery class and others will be going straight into reception. We wish them all the very best in their future education. We would love to hear how they are getting on so do please come and see us some time.

Whilst we are getting the reports ready for the children leaving, we are also preparing to say hello to at least 20 new children in September. Rainbows Playgroup up on Barnet Road is closing at the end of this term and some of the children will be moving to St John's at both our Oakmere setting and here in Baker Street. We wish them all a warm welcome.

Teddy Bears Picnic

The Teddy Bears Picnic will be taking place on Thursday 16th July with Mr Marvel coming to entertain the children (and us) at 11.45. If you are free on the morning and would like to help out, please let us know. All help (without younger siblings) gratefully received. Please complete the form on the notice the board and return the notification slip that was handed out last week, with money as appropriate. It promises to be very entertaining.

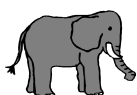


Potters Bar Carnival

What a wonderful day we had at the Potters Bar Carnival and once again, wasn't it great to be awarded 1st Prize! With children, parents and carers from both our settings, we certainly made a wonderful spectacle walking along the streets of Potters Bar. Thank you to so many of you for making it a success, the costumes were fantastic from dragons to knights and beautiful maidens. An extra thank you to the parents that joined in the festive spirit and dressed for the occasion as well. It certainly makes a difference to the overall procession.



Now it's time to be thinking of next years theme! Any ideas would be gladly received!



Fees and funding

We are getting more and more **flexible** . .



The new Early Years Flexible Pathfinder Entitlement has proven to be a great success this last year. The Government is introducing the scheme on a national level in September 2009, to help parents get back to work by giving them greater choice in the number of hours their child is at a playgroup and when the hours can be used. Children over 3 years of age, are allowed to 'spend' 15 hours a week on child care. Hertfordshire was one of the pilot counties to try out the new scheme and here at St John's, we were quick to embrace the new opportunities that the scheme offered, that's why we are so

flexible . .

We are able to offer flexible timing's to your child's day. Not only do we offer an extra hour at the end of the day - our Lunch Club, which has been very popular this last term with one day up to 22 children, but due to requests from parents and carers, we are able to offer a flexible start time, which we call Early Starts. Children can be dropped off at 9am instead of 9.15am. This especially helps parents who have dropped off older siblings at school and need to get to work.

So what this means for you is, you can spend your 15 hours over the week with some early starts, 3 or 4 sessions and some lunch clubs, as long as your time does not exceed 15 hours. Any additional hours are paid at the normal rate of £3.60/hour. For more information, please see Mrs Mash or Mrs Mills.

For those children who are not yet funded, there is a slight increase in fees up to £10.80 from September 2009, Lunch club will be £3.60 and early starts are £1 per morning.

Staff News

We would like to welcome aboard Helen Butterfield who joined our team after Easter; Helen had been volunteering since January and is currently undertaking the NVQ in Children's Care Learning & Development Level 2. Rebecca Cooke has finished the NVQ Level 2 and has started the Level 3 diploma. Mrs Mills is working towards her BA and will hopefully finish this summer, only to commence her Early Years Professional Status in the Autumn. It is all go at St John's! Karen Murphy and Sarah Whitty at St John's Oakmere have completed their BA (Hons) in Education Studies (Early Years) and are awaiting results. Karen has achieved her Early Years Professional Status.. Congratulations to them all!! The staff are regularly undertaking relevant training courses to enhance the settings skills and their understanding of children's early years.

Wall Mural

If you haven't already seen our magnificent underwater scene mural, do pop around in the car park or through the rainbow room and have a look. The children are really enjoying the interactive parts and counting the fish!



We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy and safe summer holidays, good bye to those that are leaving us and we look forward to seeing all of you who are staying with us in the Autumn Term.

From all the staff at St Johns.

Important Dates for your Diary

SUMMER TERM

16th July Teddy Bears Beach Party

Friday 17th July **LAST DAY of TERM** no lunch club

AUTUMN TERM - September 2009

Wed 2nd Sept. a.m. Existing children start

Wed 2nd Sept. p.m. New children induction

Thursday 3rd Sept. All children

Monday 26th-Friday 30th Oct Half Term

