

# Playgroup News

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October 2009

Welcome to all our children and families, we hope you had a relaxing and enjoyable summer. Although the weather is getting cooler, we will still have lots of outdoor play opportunities, so warm coats are needed. We look forward to a busy term with 20 new children started, most have settled into the busy and buzzing routine.

## This Terms Topics

For the month of September we looked at what we did in our summer holidays - where we went, how we travelled there and how we travel to playgroup and what we see on the way! For the months of October and November we are looking at Wild Animals from zebras to cheetahs and elephants. We will also be learning about Diwali, talk about and explore autumn. The autumn theme will continue in November when we will also be exploring and talking about pets. All our learning will be based on the Early Years Foundation Stage 6 areas of learning:



- Personal Social and Emotional
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

A copy of our plans are available on the notice board in the Upper Room. If you would like to know more about what we do and how we plan, please ask.

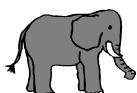
## Playgroup AGM



We will be holding our Playgroup AGM on

Monday 23rd November at our St John's Oakmere school setting. All parents, carers and interested parties are welcome to come along, we would really appreciate your views, ideas and

feedback. Our current parent representatives will be leaving the Playgroup Oversight Committee as their children have moved on to school so we will be looking for 2 new parents to become representatives. If you are interested in participating please see Mrs Mills. Toys will be available to keep children occupied during the meeting. We aim to keep the meeting short (30-45 minutes). Parking is available, directions/details to follow.



## Lunch Club & Early Starts

With the playgroup being able to offer 'Early Starts' and 'Lunch Club' 5 days a week, parents have access up to 4.25 hours a day for their child. And with 3-4 year olds funding up to 15 hours per week, you can 'spend' the 15 hours in different ways. Please see Mrs Mills or Mrs Mash if you are interested in taking up either or both options. Early starts and Lunch Club is also available for under 3 year olds at a cost of £1 per morning for early starts and £3.60 for



## Afternoon Sessions

With the demand for playgroup places ever increasing and with lots of children wanting to start in January and current children wanting more days, we would like to find out from you, if you are interested in afternoon sessions in addition to morning sessions (or instead of). We will put a form on the notice board where you can express your interest and stating which days and how many days etc. If there is enough interest with a minimum of 8 children on a day, we may be able to offer some afternoon sessions from January 2010.



Secondly, if your child is leaving at the end of this term, December 2009, please indicate on the form on the notice board, stating which school/nursery they are moving to. Or if they want extra days in January, please state your preferences. Thank you! We have a few spaces available now, please speak with Mrs Mills if you would like to increase days from this week.

## Tissues

It's that time of year when noses start running and throats start coughing and with the threat of swine flu around the corner, we would be grateful if every child could bring in a box of tissues to help us keep the children 'clean' as much as possible.



## Staff News



**A**t St John's, we are one of very few settings who

have a graduate leader and we are pleased to announce that Mrs Mills achieved her BA in Early Childhood Studies during the summer. We also have 2 graduates at St John's Oakmere. Mrs Mills is now undertaking the Early Years Professional Status which will entail a 6 hour visit from

CWDC who will be looking in great detail at what changes have been implemented in the setting to improve quality and provision. This demonstrates our commitment to high quality care and education. Government research has shown that children who attend settings with a graduate leader achieve higher outcomes. Mrs Mills will also need to implement changes at other settings, especially those settings which care for babies.

We are also pleased to say that Helen Butterfield achieved NVQ 2 in one term, congratulations Helen and is starting her NVQ3. Rebecca Cooke is continuing with her NVQ3.

## Herts Quality Standard

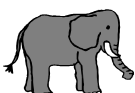
**W**e are embarking on a journey to achieve the Herts Quality Standard. We achieved it in 2006 and it runs out this November. To achieve such a status will entail lots of work, involving everyone in the setting. This is another sign of a quality setting.

## Policies

**J**ust a reminder that copies of all our policies and procedures and our Ofsted Report, are available in the Upper Room for parents to consult if they wish. Our compliments and complaints book is also in the folder. We are currently updating some of the policies that will be signed off at the next AGM meeting.

## Fruit Sharing

**T**hursday is our fruit sharing day, when we encourage children to bring in a piece of fruit to share. We will also continue to provide healthy snacks such as pitta bread, break sticks, cheese chunks, fresh chopped vegetables the other days of the week. We would appreciate any contribution to be placed in the bowl in the upper room upon arrival, thank you.



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## Treasure Chest

**I**f your child wishes to bring in a toy from home, can you encourage them to put it in our 'treasure chest' which will be located in the upper room in the morning. Obviously if children who are settling in need a comfort toy or item to help them settle, they can keep this with them.



## Parent Helpers

**I**f you have an hour (or more) to spare and your child has settled at playgroup, we would appreciate your help during the morning by playing and learning with the children - read a book, paint a picture, create with play dough, do a jigsaw puzzle or help the children with role play activities, all of which are of real benefit to the children. Or if you have any skills you would like to share with the children (or staff) like singing, musical instruments, gardening or artwork, then please speak with Mrs Mills.



## Playgroup Polo-Shirts

**S**t John's Nursery Playgroup polo-shirts are available from Lee Joys. If you are interested they are £5.50 for one or £15.00 for three with a 5% commission going to St Johns. If you are interested, please contact Mrs Mash and she will put in an order for you. Why not club together and order 3 to get the saving.

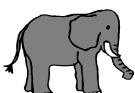


## Parent Information

**O**n the book shelf in the upper room, is a Parent Information Folder with loads of useful information for parents and carers about different facilities and services available in Hertfordshire. Please make use of these leaflets. We also display information on the notice boards, some from other settings but mostly information relevant to St John's. Please keep an eye out for new notices. Also please let us know if you need help to access written information or would like something explained. We are here to help.

## Garden Extension

**W**e want to hold an open day to mark the opening of our extended garden and underwater sea world mural. We would also greatly appreciate helpers to help us paint the wooden fence in the garden and help populate the garden with flowers and plants. If you would like to lend a hand then please speak with Mrs Mills and we will organise and garden/work party one weekend before the weather closes in.



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## Did you know...

**A**t St John's  
Methodist



Church there are many other activities going on during the week from Yoga to Ballet, Toddler group, Scouts and Youth Club, Badminton, Weight Watchers, Act4 and many more.

### Weight Watchers

While your son or daughter is at playgroup, spend some time on yourself at our Tuesday morning Weight Watchers meeting. Weighing starts at 10am until 10.30am followed by the group discussion. This is a very friendly and successful group. Come and join us and lose some pounds before the Christmas celebration gets underway.

*Gill*, meeting leader.

### Toddlers Group

All carers, parents, grandparents and childminders are welcome at this self-help group, in the large front hall. An opportunity for you and your child to socialise with other families. Tea, coffee and biscuits. £1.50 per family.

Mondays 10.00-11.30

Fridays 10.30-12.00

Please see the notice board for more activities and their timings.

Monday Badminton Club St John's Methodist Church  
We meet from 8.15 to 10.00 on Monday evenings from September till May. We will resume play 7th September 2009 and invite you to join us. You will need to be able to play to a reasonable standard. Cost £3 per session. Contact Margaret on 01707 659845 after 6 pm, or come along to the Main Hall on a Monday evening.

## Dates for your Diary

**Half Term** 26th October - 30th October

**Playgroup AGM** - all welcome Monday 23rd November at St John's Oakmere School, 1.45pm

**Nativity Play** - 10th December at 11am.

**Last Day of Term** - Friday 18th 2009 NO LUNCH CLUB

**Christmas Break** - Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December - Friday 1 January:

### SPRING TERM DATES 2010

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January:** All children return

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February:** CLOSED, Spring Half Term:

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April:** Last day of term

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> - Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April:** Easter Break

