

Playgroup News



Welcome to the 10 new children that started with us in January, most of whom have settled into the busy routine of St John's. What a snowy, cold month of January we had, I'm sure like us, there were lots of snowmen being made and snow ball fights in the garden.

Thank you for working with us when trying to communicate whether we would be open on a snowy day or not. Often decisions were being made at 10pm in the evening to be changed again first thing in the morning! Luckily we only had to close one day in the first week. If snow is forecast in the coming weeks, our snow policy still applies i.e. that if at least two of the local primary schools are closed due to the snow, then we will be unable to open either. Please check our website for updates. Hopefully warmer days are on the way...

Early Starts and Lunch Club

At St John's we are able to offer our time flexibly as we are open 4hrs 15mins every day.

Whether you receive the 3 year old funding, or have been accepted on the 2 Year Old Pilot scheme, or receive no funding at all, you can still take up Early Starts and/or Lunch Club in addition to the sessions. Any combination of early starts, sessions and lunches is available. If your child is not yet 3 or they have already used up their 15 hours, they can still take up extra time flexibly with a small fee to pay.

The funding claim forms have now been submitted to Herts County for the Spring Term but if you are interested in taking up this flexible facility for the Summer Term, please see Mrs Mash or Mrs Mills.



Spring Term Topics

During the month of January, the children were learning about shapes, how to recognise a shape, i.e. a triangle has 3 sides and 3 points whereas a circle is round with no straight lines. See the display and children's shape collage hanging from the ceiling in the Rainbow Room. We also talked about winter - with plenty of opportunities to talk about snow, ice and the cold. February we are focusing on road safety and Chinese New Year - a Chinese take away will be up and running for the week In March our focus will be Mothers Day, Easter and Spring. We will be planting seeds to grow like carrots and sweet peas to name a couple! A busy couple of months ahead, so any resources which you think will enhance the learning experience for the children then please see Mrs Mills or Mrs Mash.

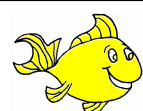
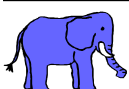


AGM minutes

The Playgroup AGM was held in November last year, the minutes are available for everyone to read, located on the wall in the Upper Room. We are pleased to announce that we have two parent representatives, Mrs Clarke and Mrs Quinn. If you have any queries, suggestions or issues you would like to raise with your parent representative, please see one of these ladies. Thank you ladies for volunteering.

Playgroup Polo-Shirts

St 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 place an order for you. Why not club together and order 3 to get the saving.



Clothing

A reminder to all; please ensure your child is wearing soft shoes or trainers. Hard shoes hurt fingers, are likely to be slippery on the climbing equipment, and having been worn outside are often muddy. Please remember to write names on **all** items of clothing, it makes it so much easier for us when the children have been outside and have 'hung' their coats on the floor. Can you also bring a change of clothes for your child in a small bag (gym bags are ideal for hanging 'low' on the peg, allowing room for the coat above). We are quite short of socks for both boys and girls (and tights for girls) so if you have any spares, we would really appreciate them, thank you.



Potters Bar Children's Centre

St John's Nursery Playgroup works closely with the Potters Bar & South Mimms Children's Centre, PB1, located at Oakmere School. Their January to March 2010 brochure outlining what activities are available for children under 5, is available in the Parent Information folder located in the Upper Room and a number of copies are also available for parent to take their own copy; here are just some of the activities on offer:



Sticky Kids, Move it, Fun for Under 1's (based here at St John's church on Monday's); Cook with me and Jumpstart to name a few.

The PB1 Centre is a drop in centre where parents can help and advice about all sorts of issues related to young children or call them on their number 01707 658547.

Tissues

The 'sneezy season' is still upon us so we would be grateful if every child could bring in a box of tissues to see us through until the warmer weather arrives, hopefully soon.



HQS Herts Quality Standards

St John's Nursery Playgroup has committed itself to go through an accreditation process called HQS. HQS is a prestigious county led scheme that ensures childcare providers are constantly improving and developing through a process of self-evaluation. As part of the HQS process, childcare providers are asked to consider their current practices and look at ways to continue to improve and develop. This includes enabling staff to do additional training. Quality services in the early years have been shown to improve achievement for children later in life. This includes teams led by higher qualified staff. St John's is one of the few playgroups with a graduate leader, with several other NVQ 3 staff. Knowing that your child is safe, well looked-after and developing well with the support of their childcare provider gives you essential peace of mind. The HQS process is one of self evaluation with the support from Young in Herts. The whole staff team are involved in the 9 modules (see flow chart on notice board behind staff table), which is expected to take approximately one year, while different areas of quality are explored and evaluated.

Part of the process was to undergo a 3 hour check of 36 areas of the setting. We received very positive feedback from the 2 assessors: If you would like to see the whole report, please speak with Mrs Mills who will explain the process further.

Dates for your Diary

SPRING TERM Mon 4th Jan - Thur 1st April
Mon 15th - Fri 19th Feb Half term, playgroup closed

Thursday 1st April LAST DAY of TERM

SUMMER TERM Mon 19th April - Fri 23rd July

Monday 19th April Inset Day, Playgroup closed

Tuesday 20th April All children return and New children visit at 1.30pm.

Monday 3rd May Bank Holiday, Playgroup closed

Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June Half term, playgroup closed.

Sunday 13th June Potters Bar carnival, all invited

Additional dates to be arranged:

Teddy Bears Picnic, summer party, Polling Day closure, photographer., Toddle waddle charity day

