

# Playgroup News

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October 2013

We would like to welcome all the new families that have joined us this September and welcome back to the families that returned after the summer holidays. We are pleased that most of the new children have settled into the busy and lively routine of the playgroup. It's a busy term on the run up to Christmas with lots of new experiences for the children.

## This Terms Topics

### Jobs in Our Community

The first few weeks in

September we talked about our summer holidays and the children produced some lovely seaside pictures using lots of different media from sand and shells, silky material and pebbles.



For the remainder of this term our main focus is Jobs in Our Community. We hope you all received our letter detailing all the areas we will be focusing on from builders to caterers, musicians and doctors and dentists. A copy is on our notice board and on the website. We've already seen dynamic doctors and budding builders, this coming week we hope to see the next master chefs like Jamie Oliver or Nigella Lawson emerge. We have had Jitu, a local dentist and his dental assistant visit us, Mrs Nibblet a nurse demonstrate some medical equipment to the children. During the term we will also look at Diwali, Fireworks and of course Christmas.

## Staff & Student News

### Congratulations to Margaret Steff

who completed her CACHE Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young Peoples Workforce in the summer term. Sherry Narula in Baker Street and Carla White at our Oakmere setting have started a CACHE Level 3 Diploma for the Children & Young People's Workforce - Early Years' Pathway with PSLA (Pre School Learning Alliance).

We are delighted to have on board for the first time an apprentice - Sarah Cornwell. Sarah started a CACHE Level 2 in Child Care and is studying with Oaklands College. Sarah is with us most sessions and has already proven to be a valuable member of the team with her energy and enthusiasm. We also have 2 other students from Oaklands College, Megan Loftus studying Health & Social Care L3, Extended Diploma on Tuesday's and Francesca Davenport on Thursday and Friday's.



## Harvest Festival

### New this year, we are inviting all the children

and their family members to a special short Harvest Festival celebration next Thursday 17th October. We will take the children into the church to look at the magnificent decorations followed by a relevant harvest story, the children will sing you some songs and Ali Facey, St John's Minister will talk to us all about why we celebrate harvest.



We would like to invite you to join us from 11.30 and bring your child to the service even if they don't normally attend on Thursdays. If you are able to, we would ask if the children can bring in items for the charity that St John's Methodist Church are supporting this year - the Whitechapel Mission. This charity supports homeless families, mostly men, so in addition to tins or packets of foods, items for men like shaving foam, soaps, towels, disposable razors would be very beneficial. If you have any comments or wish to discuss this activity with Mrs Mills, please feel free to do so. See notice board for more information.

## Photographer

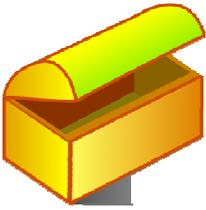
### The first Thursday we return after half term on

7th November, Stan Lenman a fantastic child photographer will be taking photos of the children during the morning (fully supervised with a member of staff). If you would prefer not to please let Mrs Mash know, there is no obligation to buy. If you would like a photo with school aged siblings, you are welcome to come at 8.20, children with younger siblings are welcome to come but after 9.30am and if your child doesn't normally attend on a Thursday, you are welcome also after 9.30am.



## Treasure Chest

At St John's we have a treasure chest which is primarily for children who need to bring in a comforter ranging from a cuddly toy, an old muslin or any other object that a child has formed a special bond with that will give them comfort if they wobble during the morning. Please make use of this facility if you think your child will benefit from it. The treasure chest also doubles up as a lost property box so if you are missing something, it may well be in the treasure chest.



## Marie Curie Daffodil Appeal

Once again, we have joined the Marie Curie 'Mini Pots of Care' daffodil growing appeal. This planting activity is an interactive and creative fundraising activity, which helps children aged 3-11 learn about science, nature and charitable giving whilst raising money to fund Marie Curie Nurses.



Every child will plant a daffodil in a pot (all resources supplied). These will be named and in February we will have a fundraising day to raise money for this very worthwhile cause; one which sadly affects so many families. The children will not only plant the bulbs but will also have the chance to care for them here at Playgroup.

## Barnado's Big Toddle Waddle

We would like to thank all the families who joined in the Barnados' Big Toddle Sponsored Walk which took place at the Furzefield at the end of July. We had another fantastic day, the weather was brilliant and we raised £213.50 whilst having fun! Thank you for your efforts in fundraising for this important annual event.



## Fund Raising On-Line

St Johns' has joined Easyfundraising, recommended by the PSLA. Go to [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk) and raise money for St John's Nursery Playgroup. It doesn't cost you anything, just shop on-line using their partner retailers including Amazon, John Lewis, M&S and over 2000 others.

## Annual Stakeholders Meeting

The next Stakeholders meeting will be held during next half term at St John's Methodist Church. All parents, carers, staff and interested parties from both settings will be invited to attend as we would really appreciate your views, ideas and feedback. We will be looking for new parent reps, if you are interested, please speak to Mrs Mills.

## Wet Weather Gear

We are fast approaching the time of year when the weather turns cooler and wetter! As we are committed to promoting outdoor play and many children prefer to play outside whatever the weather, we ask you to provide your child with a warm coat, gloves and hats as appropriate. We do provide a limited number of waterproof jackets, trousers and wellies. PLEASE make sure you child's clothing is clearly named.



## Playgroup Polo-Shirts

St John's Nursery Playgroup polo-shirts are available from Lee Joys. They cost £5.50 for one or £15.00 for three with a 5% commission going to St Johns. We have a few second-hand shirts which you can purchase for a donation of £2.



## Parent Helpers

If you can spare an hour or two a week or occasionally to come in and play with the children, help with painting, jigsaws, read a book, join in the active music session, help the staff with the children's display boards, it would be really appreciated. This term, we especially need extra hands to take the children out for a walk in the Walkodile.



We also need a parent/s willing to wood preserve the play house and the fence particularly before the weather turns inclement. On a different and unusual note, we need to make up a touchy feely activity board for outside using things like a bell, curtain rings, bellpush, door handles, phone, keyboard, plug, drawer handles (all items will be provided). If you are willing to take on/help out, please speak to Mrs Mills or Mrs Mash.

## Notices & Requests

### SPRING 2014 SESSION REQUESTS

Can you please record on the form on the notice board if you require additional sessions in the Spring term i.e. from January 2014. Once we know what our current children need, we can then offer places to children on our waiting list. Please especially think about afternoon sessions as there are not many morning sessions available.

**TISSUES** We are fast approaching the time of year when noses start running and throats start tickling. We would be grateful if every child could bring a box of tissues to help us keep the children's 'noses wiped' as much as possible



**FRUIT SHARING** At St John's we want to promote healthy eating and would ask the children to bring in a piece of fruit once or twice a week to share with the other children, then hopefully there will be enough each day to supplement the other healthy foods which the playgroup provides.



**BIRTHDAY SWEETS** Thank you to all parents who support our healthy eating policy and bringing in 'special fruits' including dried fruit to be served at snack time to celebrate your child's birthday.

**LIBRARY BOOKS** The library book borrowing scheme is well under way this term. We hope your children are keen to borrow a book and that you spend some invaluable quiet time together reading the story. Could we ask you to ensure your child's book is returned every week and we will endeavour to make sure they go home with a *new* library book every week.



### PARENT CONSULTATIONS

**Week Commencing Mon 2 December**

Consultations with parents for all children will commence from Monday 2 December. Please see the notice board closer to the time to log your preferred 10 minute time slot.

## Mobile Phone Use



Please be aware that as part of new statutory requirements, no staff or parents/visitors should use their mobile phones (or phone cameras) whilst on the playgroup premises. The Playgroup uses a mobile phone for playgroup use only (as the mainline phone is in the hallway). We also use a digital camera to take pictures of the children for their learning journals. These photos are monitored and managed by the Leadership team. If you have any concerns

## 'Learning Journal'

Your child's learning journal is available

to view at any time, please speak with your child's key worker and don't forget to take a 'You're a Star at Home' slip in the green plastic pocket at the end of the Notice Board in



## Via Email...



If you would like to receive the newsletter and any other playgroup notices via email, please let Mrs Mills or Mrs Mash know. Let's save a tree to two! Newsletters are also available on our website. Please do contact us by email if you have any queries.



## Dates for your Diary

### Autumn Term 2013

Tue 2nd Sept - Fri 20th December

28th Oct - 1st Nov Half Term PLAYGROUP CLOSED

TBC Annual Stakeholders Meeting,

7th November - Photographer Stan Lenman

W/C 2nd December - Parent consultations

Thur 12th Dec - Nativity Play 11.30am Start

Thurs 19 Dec - Xmas party all children invited and parent helpers required

Fri 20 Dec - last day of term NO LUNCH CLUB, Finish at 12.00.

### Spring Term 2014

Tue 7th Jan—Friday 4th April

10th January New children visit 1.30-2.45

17th—21 Feb Half term, PLAYGROUP CLOSED