

Stepping Stones



Little steps to happy learning.

February 2020

Spring Newsletter

Dear Parent/Carer,

Important Dates

17th February-21st February. Half Term Holiday Club. Please let us know if you'd like your child to attend this week.

25th February. Parents evening. Please talk to your key worker to book a time.

18th March Wednesday INSET day – nursery is closed

03rd March last day of term

06th April – 17th April. Easter Holiday Club. Please sign the sheet if you'd like your child to attend on these weeks. We are closed on Good Friday 10th April and Easter Monday 13th April.

20th April – Back as usual for the new term.

More changes to our calendar.

After steadily increasing our Holiday Club days over the last 3 years, we think we may have overdone the flexibility as there is no time during the year when the staff are able to take time off. We've therefore made the decision to **close for a second week at the end of August**, meaning that we are closed for two weeks at Christmas and two weeks at the end of August/beginning of September. This means our staff are able to guarantee their holiday time and we can continue to be flexible for all the other 48 weeks in the year.

The positive side of this, for parents who stretch their funding, is that it slightly increases the weekly allowance. Instead of 11:30/23:00 hours a week, you will now be able to claim 11:45/23:30 hours a week. I'm sure you understand our reason for doing this and we hope, with 7 months notice, it won't impact too much on your work or holiday plans. New calendar is attached here.

Some important reminders

*It is absolutely ESSENTIAL for your child to bring wellies and a coat this term as well as indoor shoes. They must always have a change of clothes too as we are in the garden every day, whatever the weather. An all-in-one waterproof is ideal.

*We are a NUT-FREE zone at the nursery so please don't include nut products in lunch boxes.

NO NUTELLA OR PEANUT BUTTER PLEASE.

Breakfast Club

From 10th February we will be starting Breakfast Club.

Any children arriving between 08:00 – 08:45 can now pay £2 for Breakfast. This is optional and should be booked a week ahead if possible, stating any food allergies.

We will provide a choice of the following, although there is no guarantee of the exact menu.

1. A drink (milk, hot chocolate, milk-shake, smoothie)
2. Some fruit
3. Some yoghurt or fromage frais
4. Cereal with milk
5. Toast, crumpet, muffin or similar with butter and jam/honey

Ratios

We'd like to explain staffing ratios. By law, we have to abide by staffing ratios for children's safety.

For each member of staff, we can accept the following amount of children

1:3 children if any are under 2

1:4 children if any are under 3

1:8 children for 3 and 4 year olds

As we go through the school year we get busier and busier before we lose the older ones going up to big school. This means that our ratios are much tighter from now on, and whilst we may not have many children at the end of the day, for example, we may not have space within our ratios for any extras.

So if you are early dropping your child off, or late picking them up, we are **BREAKING THE LAW** if we exceed our ratios. Practically it means that we have to keep staff back to look after late stayers and we have to pay them overtime. This expense therefore, must be passed on to the parent who is picking up late.

From now on, any parent picking up their child late without prior agreement will be charged double time for the amount overstayed, plus a £5 penalty administration charge. If the overstay is agreed in advance with the staff, then the charges will be as normal.

Topic

Our Learning Topic this month is Health and Self Care, which will include toileting, hand-washing and germs! (Quite topical with the Corona Virus outbreak).

Don't forget our communication channels. In the event of closure due to bad weather we will post information on our Facebook page and our web-site.

Phone number: 01425 673 135 – Mobile: 07724 876456 - Facebook: Parents of Stepping Stones of Sopley

Anita and the team