

HAMBLEDON NURSERY NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2020



Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back to a new academic year and what a year 2020 has been so far! We are very much looking forward to returning to a 'new normal' as we reopen to all during the Autumn term. An especially warm welcome goes out to those new families joining us this term. I trust that you have all had an enjoyable summer break, despite the ongoing restrictions and uncertainties and that your children are looking forward to having lots of fun upon returning, or indeed starting with us at Hambleton Nursery School.

Please feel rest assured that we will work very closely with you regarding settling your children. Whether in the blue room or red room, staff will work with you to ensure the best settling in procedures are in place, despite parental visit restrictions on site. Particular care and attention will be taken in supporting all children to re-adjust to the routines of nursery life and much consideration and planning has been given as to how best to support you and your children transition into the setting after such a long period of absence or if joining us for the first time.

NEW STARTERS

Practitioners will be working foremost in making your children feel safe and secure, building relations with both yourself and your children. We tailor 'settling in' to each individual family and we work extremely closely with yourselves, so please do let us know how you are feeling. Communication with the nursery can be made by email or phone call, or via a pre-arranged appointment all the while parent access to the nursery is under restriction, but we remain confident that we will be able to meet the specific needs of your child by working closely together with you at this unusual time. The settling in period can typically take a number of weeks, often when children seem happier they may relapse and require further support. Comfort toys or blankets can work well during such transitional periods and we would recommend them if your child is finding it hard to settle. We would kindly ask that such items be placed in an easy to clean zip-lock bag, or as an alternative, that you supply a photograph of such items and we can laminate these and keep them for your child at the nursery, as a way to avoid nursery to home transmission points as far as reasonably possible.

A NEW NORMAL

First and foremost, it goes without saying that the safety of you, your child and of our staff is my top priority. We are working hard, following the very latest government guidance, to develop and implement a number of new ways of operating. This will allow us to open to all as safely as possible this September, focussing on the measures that will help to limit the risk of coronavirus transmission within our beautiful setting.

We are operating under the requirements of our updated 'Protective Measures' risk assessment, which now includes a 'System of Controls'. This has been updated to include a list of steps we are taking to minimise the risk of infection from coronavirus (COVID-19) and includes steps that we appeal to you to engage and adhere to at all times such as, minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend the nursery. Please stay alert and engage fully in the NHS track and trace procedures if ever necessary.

The nursery will be promoting and supporting the increased and thorough cleaning of our hands with your children, introducing this routine more often than usual, for example on arrival to the nursery and before home time. The nursery will be ensuring good respiratory hygiene is supported by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and we have introduced an enhanced cleaning schedule which includes regularly cleaning frequently touched surfaces and toys.

Please ask the office for a full copy of the risk assessment to be sent to you should you wish to read it through, this is a working document and will be regularly evaluated and reviewed.

You may find the following government guidance useful to read for your information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

Check out the delightful online story book called 'Doctor Dog' on <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/dr-dog-ebook-eyfs-t-p-843>

Or, 'Don't Worry Little Bear' on <https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/spotlight-on/coronavirus/supporting-children-in-your-setting-coronavirus/>

There is a link there to this lovely story on the Early Years Story Book website. The story helps to explain coronavirus to young children and assure them that everything will be O.K.

RESOURCES TO HELP CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

Check out the delightful online story book called 'Doctor Dog' on <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/dr-dog-ebook-eyfs-t-p-843>

Or, 'Don't Worry Little Bear' on <https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/spotlight-on/coronavirus/supporting-children-in-your-setting-coronavirus/>

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WASHING HANDS

You can help support the nursery in our efforts to promote good hand washing routines by talking to your child about washing their hands more often and using our hand washing song (wonderfully demonstrated by Kelly in our video to help children wash their hands for 20 seconds) which is available on the Coronavirus update page of our website.

Twinkle, twinkle little star,
Look how clean my two hands are.
Soap and water, wash and scrub,
Get those germs off rub-a-dub.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
Look how clean my two hands are.

COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

At times, it is not always possible or convenient for yourselves to collect your children from nursery and (on a 'one off' situation) children are collected by another adult or parent for play dates and so on. In these circumstances, we ask you notify the staff member at the gate at drop off, or call and/or email the office to notify the nursery when and who will be collecting your children. This information will then be written in the diary in reception for staff to note specific daily arrangements.

Please do be aware that we will not allow a child to leave the nursery with an unauthorised person, anyone under the age of 16 years or anyone who we have not met before. Please email the office a photograph of the adult who will be collecting your child if they are previously unknown to the nursery. Alternatively, you may wish to supply a password which will then be shared with relevant room supervisors before collection times. This word can be used by the unknown person collecting your child so that we know that they are who you say they are.

The arrangements for long standing collections, for example, child carers and nannies are confirmed in the office and do not need to be written in the diary each day, details on authorised persons will be kept on your personal records.

If you wish to make a long standing arrangement to collect your child at the earlier time of 2.45pm at the end of the red room afternoon sessions in order to facilitate a school run or so on, please let the office know. At all other times, please make efforts to collect you child at the end of the session at 3pm.

DONATION

We were utterly delighted to receive the incredibly generous donation of money from the July school leavers of £650 for the nursery PTA. This money is being set aside to make improvements to the outside area. Sadly, we had to postpone the building of a planned outside shelter in the big garden in the Spring of 2020, to further support and promote our passion for outside learning. This wonderful fundraising effort will play a huge part in enabling this project to go ahead and securing the future opportunities that children will one day experience at Hambledon Nursery.

On behalf of all staff may I also take this opportunity of thanking you all for both the gifts and the many wonderful cards, with lovely words of thanks and support at the end of last term.

ALL ABOUT ME FORM AND UPDATES

Just before the summer holiday period we sent home our welcome packs with a copy if our 'All About Me' forms or the update version. Please take time to complete the questions detailed, if you have not already done so and return to your key person at your earliest convenience. This will give us an opportunity to celebrate any achievements that your child has made over the summer, for example, riding a bicycle or starting to swim. We are also able to make any sensitive adjustments to their learning, if for example, you have lost a beloved pet over the holiday period or been effected more widely by Coronavirus as a family, with possible instances of bereavement or other issues that the nursery might need to be made aware of.

WEATHER

We hope to see continued warm weather over September and would request that you supply a named sun hat. Once a day sun cream will need to be applied prior to sessions when appropriate. Please ensure that you supply either wellington boots or croc style shoes for outdoor play. We would also remind you that waterproof clothing is required for every session for water play or rainy weather. To avoid mislaying items of clothing, please ensure that you name everything, even shoes with a permanent marker or appropriate name label. The outside shoes and set of waterproof trousers/dungarees should remain at the nursery for the duration of the half term please, to help reduce home to nursery transmission points.

BELONGINGS

Please note that we are required to limit the amount of materials and items that are transferred between home and nursery, the following points require your attention.

- No toys from home or show and tell items at this time please.
- Essential comfort items only, these will be placed in a zip-lock sealed plastic bag and kept in your child's tray or where you child can access as needed. We strongly suggest that you supply a photograph of the comfort item instead if this suffices for you child, which can be laminated and kept in your child's tray for the duration of a half term.
- Pictures and craft items that your child makes during a session will be kept in a special folder until the end of term. Your child can help decorate their folder at the nursery and look forward to when they can take them home at the end of the term. If your child becomes upset we will of course allow items that they have taken pride in to go home at the end of the session, but we shall strive to avoid this where we can, the exception being junk model and clay items.
- Please supply a bag of named spare clothes, including pants and socks. This will be kept on your child's peg for the entire half term. Dirty or wet items will be returned in sealed bag for you to wash and then return to the nursery to restock your child's bag on their peg.
- If your child is staying for an afternoon session in the red room, please supply a healthy lunch in a Tupperware style plastic box, rather than the fabric style lunch packs. Nursery staff members will wipe the outside of the lunchbox when your child arrives at nursery, before placing them on the lunchbox trolley. We urge you to please clean the lunch boxes thoroughly after use each day.

EMPTY CLASSROOM SESSIONS

We are planning to resume the weekly themed 'Empty Classroom' sessions this Autumn term and to be outside as much as possible generally all the while the weather is fine. We go outside rain or shine to enjoy the wonderful opportunities to play together as a whole nursery, happily engaged in den building, campfire cooking and bug hunting, so once again please provide wellies and waterproofs to remain on your child's peg for the half term.

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Children will have spent longer than ever away from their childminders, nannies and the nursery during lockdown and beyond. Their experiences will all have been different from what they are used to prior to the coronavirus outbreak and staying at home for prolonged periods of time and the change to routine may have caused difficulties for some children, such as changes in behaviour or mood. The uncertainty that the Covid-19 outbreak has caused has been felt far and wide and will impact on children and parents alike for some time to come. Children need to feel safe and secure in order to develop and so it is of central importance to us at the nursery that we focus on your children's well-being, confidence and friendships as they return to the nursery. Everyone's mental health, pastoral or wider wellbeing support is of central importance to us as a nursery.

The following government guidelines may be helpful for you to refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

FESTIVALS AND CELEBRATIONS

It is important that children recognise the things that make them unique and can talk about some of the similarities and differences in relation to friends, family and traditions. With this in mind, your key person would be very interested to know what festivals or notable dates you celebrate.

Whilst we celebrate various religious and cultural festivals from around the world, we respect each individual's choice to participate. Please speak to your key person for further support here or email the office. Please note that this year we will not be able to mark Harvest festival in the usual way with a visit to St Peter's church for our Harvest service. Children will still practice some seasonal songs and learning about harvest and seasonal changes in the Autumn through a broad range of learning experiences at the nursery. We will look into recording the songs learned and making a video that can be send to you via email. The nursery will be inviting some older members of our community to receive our harvest produce. All donations of food, preferably dried or tinned would be gratefully received during the week commencing Monday 28th September in boxes placed outside at drop off or collection.

EMPTY CLASSROOM SESSIONS

Monday 7th September - Return to Nursery after the summer holiday.

Monday 28th September - Harvest Festival Week, please leave any donations outside at drop off

Monday 26th October - Half Term Week

Monday 1st November - Return to nursery after half term

Monday 16th November - Red Room Parent Phone Consultations commence (details to follow)

Wednesday 18th November - Beep Beep Day (Road Safety awareness day)

Monday 30th November - Blue Room Parent Phone Consultations commence (details to follow)

Thursday 17th December - Christmas Party (TBC) and Blue Room finishes the Autumn term

Friday 18th December - Last Day of Term

Monday 4th January - Spring Term Starts

Further details on these and other events will follow nearer the time, such as alternative plans for the end of term nativity. The staff and I are all very much looking forward to a fun and exciting autumn term and seeing one another again after such a long period of time. Please do not hesitate to speak to myself or any member of the team should you have any queries or requirements.

Kind regards

Kate Walford

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