



The Ark Newsletter January/February 2009

A belated welcome back to The Ark and the start of a New Year, and we hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas break.

Christmas Fundraising

We are pleased to report that we raised the sum of £420 through the Christmas Stars, and are grateful to everyone who bought a star and everyone who donated a prize. We still have children's footprints bags for sale from the office and if anyone would like a DVD of the nativity we can make a copy for you for £2.50.

As the days begin to lengthen we are looking forward to more outside play, and hope to have a big sandpit built. We also plan to have a doorway created between the Baby and Toddler Rooms, to improve the transition for the older babies up to the Toddler Room. As you can see, we are therefore putting all fundraising to good use.

Spring Activities

Our theme this term in the 3 – 5 room is 'Night and Day', including looking at different animal behaviour, especially of nocturnal animals. In the 2 – 3 room the theme is 'Looking after Ourselves and our Environment', including learning about, and helping to prepare, different foods. The children will also be doing some junk modelling, so we would be grateful if you could provide items such as cereal boxes, cardboard rolls from kitchen towels and anything else you think suitable, providing it is clean and uncontaminated eg. by food traces.

Parents' Questionnaire

You will find enclosed our yearly questionnaire which we are issuing a little earlier this year to give us time to action any improvements or changes prompted by your responses. We would be most grateful if you would complete and return the questionnaires by 11th February 2009.

A Few Reminders

Name tags: Once again, please could you ensure that your children's possessions are **all clearly named**, especially lunch boxes, coats and bags. A name tag is preferred as hand-written names on clothes labels fade after washing. Any loose clothing or footwear should be in shoe bags, on pegs. This is particularly important as the corridor where they are kept leads to a fire exit. Also could you please provide a separate drawstring bag for nappies, wipes and nappy cream for all

children in the 2-3 room who are still in nappies. We do have drawstring shoe bags for sale in the office if you need one.

Fruit donations and Healthy lunchboxes: At The Ark we promote healthy eating and would like to thank you for your continued support in providing a piece of fruit for snack time. The children do enjoy sharing their fruit. Popular fruits are apples, bananas and pears. grapes. PLEASE NO KIWI FRUIT OR STRAWBERRIES as we have a child who has a severe allergic reaction to these fruits. If your child stays for a lunchtime session and brings a lunchbox, please support our healthy eating ethos by providing your child with a healthy lunch.

EVENTS

1. Parents' Consultation Week

Monday 9th February – Friday 13th February 2009. If you wish to discuss your child's progress with his/her keyworker please feel free to make an appointment during this week. If you cannot attend during the day we will have some appointments available from 5.00pm on **Wednesday 11th February 2009.**

2. Jumble Sale

Saturday 28th February 2009 from **12 noon – 2.00pm** at the Village Hall. Anybody willing to help at the jumble sale will be most welcome – please speak to Maggie, Pauline or one of the committee. Please leave donations of jumble at the hall from 10.00am on the morning.

Staffing Matters

We welcomed one new member of staff just before Christmas: Lauren, who works three days per week during the After-School period, and also when needed in the school holidays.

Children's Illnesses

There seem to have been an exceptionally high number of illnesses circulating through The Ark this winter, and we would like to take this opportunity to remind parents not to send children back to The Ark until they are properly recovered. Children will quite often appear better when they first wake in the morning, with their temperature back to normal, and parents may be tempted to bring them to The Ark. However, children should stay home until it is clear that the temperature will remain normal throughout the day and their appetite is also normal. This is not only for the good of the children who are/have been ill, but also to prevent the spread of infection to other children.

Following the introduction of a new statutory framework for childcarers, we are now able to administer non-prescribed medicines with parents' permission. This would only be done in exceptional circumstances, but does allow us, for instance, to give Calpol if a child's temperature suddenly rises substantially, and it is not possible for a parent to collect the child immediately. We will always contact you before giving your child any medicine. Therefore please could you sign and return the permission slip enclosed if you are willing to allow us to administer non-prescribed medicines.

I give permission for staff of The Ark to administer non-prescribed medicines to my child/ren.....(please print name) in circumstances that warrant it.

Name (please print).....

Signed.....Date.....

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Signed.....Date.....

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Name (please print).....

Signed.....Date.....

Dates for your diary

The Ark is open all year round **except:**

All Bank Holidays

Summer - Closed Monday 31st August 2009 – Friday 4th September 2009.

Christmas - closed on Thursday 24th December 2009, and opening again Monday 4th January 2010

Term Time Dates

Spring Term

Tuesday 6th January 2009 – Friday 3rd April 2009

Half Term: Monday 16th February 2009 – Friday 20th February 2009 - Holiday Club at The Ark

Monday 6th – Thursday 9th April 2009 & Tuesday 14th – Monday 20th April 2009 - Holiday Club at The Ark

Summer Term

Tuesday 21st April 2009 – Friday 17th July 2009

Monday 20th July 2009 – Friday 28th August 2009- Holiday Club at The Ark

Half Term: Tuesday 26th May 2009 – Friday 29th May 2009 - Holiday Club at The Ark

Autumn Term

Monday 7th September 2009 – Friday 18th December 2009

Half Term: Monday 26th October 2009 – Friday 30th October 2009 - Holiday Club at The Ark

Monday 21st, Tuesday 22nd & Wednesday 23rd December 2009; Monday 4th January 2010 – Holiday Club at The Ark

Other Events

Parents' Evening - Wednesday 11th February 2009 from 5.00pm, The Ark.

Jumble Sale - Saturday 28th February 2009 12 noon – 2.00pm, Village Hall.