



The Ark Newsletter September 2008

Welcome back to The Ark and the start of a new academic year. A very warm welcome to all the new children who have just started and their parents/guardians.

Committee

A new committee was formed at the Annual General Meeting in July; thanks to Nicola Horlock for continuing in the role of Chairperson, Susannah De Ferry Foster for continuing in the Treasurer's role, and Cherise Sweatland for temporarily taking on the Secretary's position. Three members left the committee, and have been replaced by four new committee members. Photos of the new committee will soon be displayed in the foyer.

As most of you will already know, we have recently registered The Ark Child Okeford as a company limited by guarantee, in order to protect committee members' personal financial liability, and we have now applied for the company to be registered as a new charity. Our aims have not changed; they continue to be to provide high quality childcare and education at affordable costs. We still need and greatly appreciate the support of all parents in our fundraising efforts.

Keyworkers

Whilst at pre-school your child will be allocated a member of staff to be their keyworker for the year. Key workers build up close relationships with their group of children, carrying out continual assessments, and planning activities to suit the children's individual needs. You are always welcome to discuss your child's development with your child's key worker at any time.

Your child's keyworker is.....

Childcare Places incl. After-School & Holiday Club

Sessions this year at The Ark are now nearly full in the mornings with some vacancies in the afternoons. Therefore, if you need to change your child's sessions, The Ark needs a minimum of one month's notice in writing to try and accommodate your request.

There are a few vacancies for Breakfast, After School and Holiday Clubs so please see Pauline or Maggie if you wish to book your child in for any of these

sessions. Now that these sessions are filling up it is advisable to book regular sessions in advance; the same rules will apply with regard to the requirement to give one month's notice for holidays/any changes. You may still book ad hoc sessions if spaces are available but please note that from now on any ad hoc spaces booked but not taken will be charged for in full, unless cancelled more than 24 hours in advance.

Fire Procedure

In the event of a fire, the following emergency arrangements will be implemented. The children will be escorted out of the building to the fire assembly point which is the recreational field next to the school grounds. From here, parents will be contacted to collect their children. If the weather is unfavourable the children will be taken to the community centre next to the park and looked after by staff until collected.

Sweatshirts, Tee shirts and Shoe Bags

There are sweatshirts and t-shirts available for the children.

Prices are:

Tee shirts £5.00

Sweatshirts £8.50

Shoe Bags £3.50

Name tags

Please could you ensure that your children's possessions are **all clearly named**, especially coats and bags. A name tag is preferred as hand-written names on clothes labels fade after washing. Wellington boots should be in shoe bags, on pegs.

EVENTS

1. Jumble Sale

Saturday 27th September 2008 from **12 noon – 2.00pm** at the Village Hall. Please leave donations of jumble at the hall from 10.00am on the morning.

2. Coffee Morning

Saturday 11th October 2008 from 10.30am at The Ark. This is an opportunity for parents to meet committee members and each other in a relaxed atmosphere, with or without their children.

3. Photographs

Ashley Wood Studios will be coming to take children's photographs on **Thursday 27th November 2008** from **1.30pm**. Arrangements can be made nearer the date for children and/or siblings who do not normally attend at that time.

Fruit donations and Healthy lunchboxes

At pre-school 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.

Staffing Matters

We welcome two new members of staff this term: Tiffany will be taking over from Helen in the 0-2 room during the afternoons, whilst Helen will move to the pre-school room for three days per week. Tiffany previously worked at Flying Start Nursery and has recent experience with the under 2 age group. Kevin, who is our new cook, has many years experience as a chef, and is also the parent of three young children. The Ark also welcomes a new student, Sarah, who is working in the 3-5 room. She is training with Bournemouth & Poole College for NVQ level 2.

We are pleased to report that both Josie and Karen have completed NVQ level 3, whilst Lucy who works with the 5+ age group is embarking on training for NVQ level 2.

Toddler Group

The Toddler Group is funded through The Ark, although it is run separately by parent volunteers. It is held every Monday morning from 9.30am in the Community Centre. It gives parents the opportunity for both themselves and their children to meet and socialise with other parents, and a small fee is charged as and when they attend. If any parent has any questions regarding Toddler Group please ask Maggie.

Parking

A quick reminder that there are no parking spaces available in the school car park for parents between the hours of 8.30am and 3.30pm during school term-time. The disabled spaces may be used by parents who are dropping off or collecting only if they have a disabled or sick child or are themselves disabled.

We hope that your child has an enjoyable and fun-packed term at The Ark. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

Dates for your diary

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

All Bank Holidays

Christmas - closed on Wednesday 24th December 2008, and opening again Friday 2nd January 2009

Summer - Closed for one week; exact dates to be confirmed.

Term Time Dates

Autumn Term

Wednesday 3rd September 2008 – Friday 19th December 2008

Half Term: Monday 27th October 2008 – Friday 31st October 2008 - Holiday Club at The Ark

Monday 22nd & Tuesday 23rd December 2008; Friday 2nd & Monday 5th January 2009 – Holiday Club at The Ark

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 21st August 2009- Holiday Club at The Ark

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

Other Events

Saturday 27th September 2008 from 12 noon – 2.00pm - Jumble Sale at Village Hall

Saturday 11th October 2008 - from 10.30am - Coffee, cake and chat

Thursday 27th November 2008 at 1.30pm - Photographs