

Newsletter

Autumn 2014 (2)



Welcome to our latest newsletter.

NEWS FROM THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Carol Hill

Welcome to our final newsletter of 2014. Please take time to read it as it contains all the important dates regarding our Christmas activities and key opening and closing times. We hope you have kept plenty of free dates in your diaries!

As always we have had a busy half term after the summer break. We are delighted with our baby room refurbishment including new décor and carpeting. Our vision for Baby room has been to create a more natural looking space where parents can feel like their children are cared for in a more homely environment. The new carpeting and flooring together with a fresh lick of paint and new furnishings have really made this vision come to reality. Thank you to Executive Flooring and Complete Décor for helping us achieve this.

Plea for Car Parking

Once again we have been in discussions with School regarding the use of the car park. The car park is intended for use by staff at School and Children's Centre management only. It is NOT to be used for drop off and collection of children. Due to the continued breach of these rules by families, we are looking at ways to prevent access to the car park from the drive, which will place a heavy cost burden on the Centre that we cannot afford and will direct funds away from the resources we need for the children and the environment. Therefore we would ask once again that people respect the rule and not use the car park on the site. Parking is also not permitted on the yellow zig zags at the bottom of the drive during the advertised times. We will be in discussions with the community police team regarding matters raised relating to this.

Dark nights are upon us and with children arriving and leaving in the dark, we do not want to be faced with a potential accident caused by cars manoeuvring in the small space to drop off and collect. Think child first. Take time to park safely, a little further away on the main road and walk to the Centre.

Thank you.

Sarah Baker and Catherine Toy

Outdoor play: - The best classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky." (Margaret McMillan, c 1925). Although we are coming to the winter months and outdoor play may at times be more limited, we would like to acknowledge how important outdoor learning is to children's continued, health, development and learning. Because of its importance we will continue to provide outdoor play throughout the day during both sessions unless severe weather stops us doing so. Where possible free flow between the indoors and outdoors will be provided unless during colder days it is detrimental to the children choosing to stay inside.

Outdoor play supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles, offering opportunities for physical play, movement and freedom in a more spacious area than indoors. Through activities like ring games it supports children's relationship building, turn taking and cooperation skills and through activities like sand and water play we are supporting children to develop creativity, problem solving

skills and imagination. There are so many benefits to encouraging children's play and exploration in the outdoors as it gives them contact with the natural world, offering unique experiences such as direct contact with the weather and changing seasons.

How can we all support these opportunities for children?

- We would be grateful for parents to continue to provide outdoor clothing, including wellington boots, waterproof coats, hats and gloves.
- Please provide a change of clothes in the event that children get wet/dirty.
- We will continue to provide waterproof trousers and we will be buying some new outdoor aprons/waterproof rain coats for use with water play.

Whilst practitioners do their best to ensure children do not get wet or dirty this is not always possible. We will put as many controls in place to prevent this and we will never leave a child in wet/dirty clothing, children will be changed when needed and any wet coats will be dried as much as possible.

ACTIVITIES IN THE CENTRE

Baby Room

Firstly, we would like to welcome you to our' new look 'Baby room, and as you will have already seen we have now completed our refurbishment. I'm sure you will agree it looks great, and provides for a bright and homely room for the babies to explore, learn and play in.

During this last term, we have enjoyed learning about harvest and Autumn by exploring foods that have grown and also by then investigating Autumn finds e.g. leaves, pinecones, and twigs with our senses. We had a spooky time for Halloween, trimming up the room, making a pumpkin lantern, investigating its contents before finally dressing up for our scary party.

Over the next couple of months, we will be preparing for all the fun of Christmas by getting creative, dressing up and singing.

Michelle Wood
Baby Room Co-coordinator

Caterpillar Room

From September, the children have enjoyed a variety of creative and fun activities. We have been looking at 'people who help us' both at home, nursery, our local community and the wider community. We had a visit from our local Cawthorne postmaster, a police officer and Reverend Jean to support this theme.

Our most recent topic has been Autumn, with our focus on exploring our environment. We have been playing in the sensory garden, looking at the signs of Autumn, and putting this into creative form with harvest hats, leaf prints and animal collages.

What's next for Caterpillar Room?

Christmas is approaching very fast and it is such a wonderful time to get creative and have fun. We will be making lots of things to take home, and focus the learning around 'the first Christmas'. Throughout November, we will also be practising for our Christmas Nativity.

Notes for parents

As the weather turns colder and wetter, we would like to ask parents/carers to provide wellies, warm coats, hats and scarves. (As the children play outdoors, there may be times that coats and gloves will become wet.) All of the staff team will endeavour to ensure coats

are dry when children go home, but depending on how wet the item of clothing is, it is not always possible and we apologise for this. Thank you for your continued support.

Thank you

*Emma Thistlewood
Caterpillar Coordinator*

Butterfly Room

Over this term, the Butterfly children have really enjoyed our first theme of 'People Who Help Us'. We talked and learned about people who help us at home and nursery and in our local and wider community. We had a visit from our local post office where the children received their own stamps and then were able to post their own letters back to nursery. We had a very exciting visit from the police! The children learned about how the police help keep us safe and they had the experience of sitting in a real police car and to wear real police hats!

The children loved the next theme of 'Autumn'. We arranged several walks to collect many different coloured leaves, pine cones and conkers which the children made into a lovely display of their Autumn artwork. We learned about the changes in our environment that take place during the season of Autumn and also the types of animals we might see. The children had a great hibernation party day where we all dressed up in our pyjamas pretending to be hibernating animals, learning about what it means when animals hibernate. We played hibernation games including moving like different animals. The children really enjoyed pretending to shake their tails like squirrels!

We have also enjoyed our theme of light and dark and have been learning about where light comes from, looking for different sources of light both at home and nursery. The children have particularly enjoyed exploring our dark den with the torches and also using the torches outside in the early evening, making shadows.

We have had lots of spooky, sensory activities out for Halloween. The children enjoyed getting messy, scooping out the insides of a pumpkin, exploring it and mixing with it. They have also enjoyed mixing potions in the water and exploring ice with spooky spiders inside it!

Over the rest of this term we are going to be getting creative making bonfire night pictures and models. We will also be exploring our theme of Funky Fingers! In which we aim to promote children's fine motor skills through a variety of exciting activities including dough gym! Of course as Christmas time is now approaching we will be doing lots of fun, festive activities and also learning about the nativity and practising for our big performance in church!

Finally, we would like to thank all parents/carers for your contributions to the home learning activities we have been sending out. This is greatly valued by all team members and the work the children have done at home looks great on our displays!

*Becky Lofthouse
Butterfly Room Coordinator*

Out of School Service

Friday 24th October was a sad day for both staff and children, saying goodbye to Michele Pilling. We will miss Michele greatly and wish her all the best in the future.

It was great to see all out holiday club and after school children this half term, having fun making dens, haunted houses and playing lots of spooky games.

We are looking at running a holiday club on Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd December, for which the itinerary will soon be available. This is a great opportunity for you to get your last minute Christmas shopping done, child free. Let us know if you have any Christmas activities and crafts we can do. Please also let us know if don't receive an itinerary for any holiday club and we can add you to our mailing list.

<http://www.cawthornechildrenscentre.co.uk>

Can I remind all parents to let us know if any of your details change, especially work/mobile numbers. If for any reason we need to get in contact with you we can do quickly and easily. For children in after school club ,if parents haven't returned the "Change of Contact Details" form can you please do this ASAP, so we can update your details and our fire log.

In After School Club we will be celebrating bonfire night by making firework buns and for Christmas we are planning many activities including making chocolate Santa sleighs. Now the darker nights and winter months are in, the children do still enjoy going outside and will try to arrange outdoor play as much as is practicable. Can we ask parents if you would like to bring some outdoor shoes for your child/ren to wear while playing outside, this will save you cleaning their school shoes every night. There will be a basket for their outdoor shoes to go in at the side of the slipper basket. Again children are welcome to bring slippers or indoor shoes, as we do ask children when they are inside to put indoor shoes on, as this saves muddy footprints around the shed.

Can parents please let us know if you are cancelling a session, or your child is poorly, or your child/ren are attending an after school activity in school. Please don't think we will automatically assume your child is continuing something they attended in the previous half term. Also if your child/ren is to be collected by another adult or family member, ensure that they know the password. This will save any phone calls to you and we know where all children are at all times.

We will be arranging a "Child & Parents" suggestions board in this next half term. Please feel free to write on a slip of paper and pop it in the box provided. We will then add these to our board and will try and put in place all suggestions. Please bear with us while we plan this. Also you can add on anything you are happy with e.g., an activity you or your child/ren have enjoyed. You can do this anonymously or add your name. Also please feel free to let us know any concerns or any ideas you may have to improve our services.

Thank you for your continued support.

Amy and Katherine.

Out of School Coordinators.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL ROOMS

Holiday allowances 2014- The final invoice for 2014 will be prepared by the 15th November. If you have any holiday entitlement remaining that you would like to use for 2014, please either email myself or drop a note in the office by the 14th November to claim the deduction off your invoice.

Nursery Funding - New Entitlement Reminder -For those parents whose children turn 3 years during the coming year, Nursery Funding will become available the term after their 3rd birthday. Cawthorne Children's Centre is able to offer sessions to enable your child to receive this entitlement. Each child at present will be able to access 15 hours funded care each week, during term time. There are specific criteria that need to be met to access all 15 hours, with the main one being attendance at the Centre over 2 days per week. Sessions can be accessed between 8am and 6pm each day. Therefore if your child is approaching 3 years, and you would like to look at changing sessions in order to maximise their entitlement to nursery funding, please do not hesitate to call into the office and speak with a member of the management team.

Fee Payment Reminder: - To clarify our policy on receipt of payments.

We prepare invoices on the 15th of the month for the month in advance. We then require payment for these invoices by the 30th of the month, or an agreed date close to this for those in receipt of childcare vouchers through their pay. If payments are not received and kept up to date after 3 consecutive months, then we will issue a final notice and request to pay in full within 7 days. If this request is not met, we will discuss termination of sessions and take action to recover the debt.

Should you be unable to pay fees at any time, please contact Carol Hill in the first instance to discuss options that are available. Thank you.

Last Day for Payments December: - We will be carrying out our final banking for 2014 on Monday 22nd December for payments due for January invoices. Therefore please do not bring any cash or cheques after this date as we have no storage facilities for them. If you wish to pay after this date, you can make a payment by digital banking. Please call into the office to ask for banking details should you prefer to use this method.

Easy Fundraising :- Reminder for Christmas Shopping - We would like to invite everyone to register with easy fund raising, to enable the Centre to benefit from donations that companies make as a result of purchases that you make on well know web sites. It is very easy to register and you can set a tool bar on your home page that tells you if a site you are visiting offers donations via easy fundraising. Sites include Amazon, Argos, Holiday Companies. It doesn't cost anything for you to join but the Centre benefits from the donation. With Christmas on the horizon, people usually look to the internet for shopping and we could therefore benefit from the purchases made at this busy time. Please take a look at easyfundraising.co.uk and should you require any further details, please call into the office. We have already raised over £200 using this site. Thank you.

Christmas Opening: - We close Christmas on 23rd December 6pm and re-open on Monday 5th January 2015, 7.30am, rather than open for one day on 2nd January. Thank you.

Christmas Nativity: - It's that time of year again when we use our wonderful signing voices and speaking skills to bring you our 2014 Christmas nativity. This year's nativity is called 'Our First nativity' and includes short narration, children's speaking parts and some short songs. The Nativity will be performed at Cawthorne Church on December 15th at 9.30 am. The production is expected to last for approx. 30 minutes with refreshments served afterwards by the Ministry Group. Further details will follow regarding any help we need with costumes and details of arrivals and collections will be made available for those children not normally in the Centre on Mondays.

Spirit of Christmas- This annual service will be held in Cawthorne Parish Church on Friday 12th December, 7pm. All organisations in the village come together to celebrate the start of the Christmas period, and create a display, which this year will be themed around 'Love' with the title of 'The Light of the World'. All families are welcome to share in this special event.

Skye Cycle: - Thank you to everyone who kindly donated their Bric-a-Brac for our Skye Cycle fundraising initiative. You helped to raise £77.41 which will go towards buying new singing props and musical instruments.

Children in need: - This year we are joining the fundraising frenzy of Children in Need and dressing up as our favourite Super heroes to support the Children's in need theme of 'Superheroes'. Join us on the week commencing 10th November and dress up as your favourite superhero. You are welcome to come dressed up on any of your session days. On Friday 14th November we will be holding a Superheroes Party day with lots of activities, fun and adventure! Please donate to this fantastic cause by sponsoring your child to dress up and by buying their buns/biscuits. Please see additional letter that will have further details.

Adverse Weather: - In the event of adverse weather we will send a text to one member of each household to advise what our plans for opening are. It is therefore important for all changes in contact numbers to be reported to the office. We will also update our website with details as they become available and also use Dearne FM schools closure service.

We would ask that people do not set out for the Centre until they have received communication from us that the service is open. Thank you.

Where it snows throughout the day, we will keep watching the weather and make decisions about keeping open, based on safety of families and staff travelling home. We will communicate potential early closure using the text service and ask that children can be collected as soon as practicable

during such times. Where the Centre does not open, our policy to offer an alternative session, subject to availability, will apply, and no refunds will be offered unless your child attends full time. For services in Out of School club which is currently full, no alternative sessions will be available so a refund will be offered and a credit given with the next prepared invoice.

Outdoor /Indoor Footwear: -As we are heading towards the winter months it is time for us to remind you to send your child with appropriate clothing i.e. wellington boots and coats, so that we can ensure children are appropriately clothed for having daily access to the outdoor environments.

We would also like to ask if you can bring to nursery a pair of indoor shoes i.e. slippers so that your child has a clean pair of shoes they could change into when playing indoors. This will help us to keep our carpets and floors clean and safe for use.

Key Responsibilities: Just to remind everyone of key contacts in the Centre:

Carol Hill - carol@cawthornechildrenscentre.co.uk

For all matters relating to finance, holiday entitlement, invoicing, outstanding balances, child care vouchers, session changes, notice periods, out of school planning and nursery funding.

Sarah Baker - sarah@cawthornechildrenscentre.co.uk

For all matters relating to the management of children's care and education, policies and procedures, future developments/improvement of the Centre, safeguarding, health and safety, staff training and development and event planning.

Staff Update: - We are very sad to announce that Amy Johnson will be leaving us on 23rd December 2014. Amy has been with us for 8 and half years, working both in nursery and managing very successfully, the out of school service and holiday club. Amy has recently relocated to Lincolnshire and has been travelling long distances every day. Unfortunately for us, Amy is now leaving to spend more time with her young family. We know how this will be disappointing news for many children and families but we are looking forward to enjoying this final half term with Amy and having a party week for the last week of term. We will miss you Amy, thank you for your continued hard work and dedication to the Centre.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The following provides detail of forthcoming events and key dates:

November 3rd	N/A	Pre School recommences Out of School club recommences.
W/c November 10th	N/A	Join us all week for our Children In Need Activities
December 12th	7pm	Spirit of Christmas, Cawthorne Church
December 13th	9.30am	Christmas Party Village Hall
December 15th	9.30am	Christmas Nativity - Cawthorne Church
December 19th	N/A	Pre School finishes for Christmas Break Out of School finishes for Christmas Break
December 22/23rd	N/A	Holiday Club for Out of School.
December 23rd	6pm	Centre closes for Christmas 2014
January 5th 2015	7.30am	Centre re opens after Christmas.
January 5th 2015	N/A	Inset Day Cawthorne School No Out of School Club Pre-school recommences.
January 6th 2015	7.30am	Out of School Club recommences.

Best Wishes,

**Carol Hill,
Business Manager.**