

Newsletter

Autumn 2015, 1



Welcome to our latest newsletter.

NEWS FROM THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Carol Hill

The start of the new academic year has arrived once more and the team have been planning activities for the months ahead. All the details for this are provided in the individual room sections below.

As many of you may have seen and heard in the press over recent weeks, childcare has been a topic for discussion regarding the 30 hours free childcare for 3 and 4 years olds. Whilst this is a positive for working families, we have to consider the financial impact that it will have on the business. Families will have 30 hours of childcare free at the relevant hourly rate that the nursery sets. The issue faced is that if this hourly rate is only the same as the rate paid to a nursery by the local authority, then there will be no income to pay for staffing, resources and cover the general running of the setting. Therefore it is very important for our sustainability that the government sees through its pledge to increase the average funding rates paid to providers. If this does not happen then 30 hours free childcare will not be affordable. Some nurseries are suggesting that they will opt out of offering this service and some may only offer a limited number of 30 hour places. Therefore will be closely watching how this issue unfolds and we will keep you informed of our plans in respect of this.

With regards to the costs of childcare, unfortunately we expect to see these continue to rise over the next 6 months. We are affected by the government changes to minimum wages, particularly the planned living wage that has to be implemented in April 2016. This will be an increase of 6% on our current wages bill. We will be looking at how we can afford this and what effect it will have on our pricing. However, in order to do this we need to know what the funding rate will be for the free childcare sessions first. Therefore the next review of our fees is planned for January but we may need to wait until the funding rate is released. Please bear with us during this difficult time and rest assured we will set out our plans as soon as possible and we aim to balance keeping costs affordable for families alongside keeping the business sustainable. We are a not for profit organisation and work strongly to these values.

If anyone has any suggestions to help with fees and the fee structures, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Sarah Baker

We would like to welcome to the Centre, all the new families who have started with us with the onset of the new term. We hope that everyone enjoys their time with us and we will be working hard to effectively support all children's learning and development through the provision of a range stimulating activities. As a management team, we always strive to improve the service we offer, and with this in mind if anyone has any feedback for us please do not hesitate to call into the office.

We have said a 'sad goodbye' to many children who have left us this summer to start their new journey to school. We have been overwhelmed by the lovely cards and gifts the team have received and would like to thank everyone for their kind words and thoughtfulness.

We are planning our autumn programme at the moment, so please look out for key diary dates for our Christmas activities during the coming weeks.

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Well although we have been slightly let down by the great British summer this year, we have still been able to enjoy and learn in our outdoor areas. Butterfly garden had a wonderful mini makeover, made possible by Barclays bank when a team of professionals came in to transform the reading area, construction area and mud kitchen. They also started to improve the Sensory garden by laying some new bark, something we will continue to improve if we receive more funding. It's amazing to see the impact these small improvements have had on children's approach to play and learning. They are much more focussed and playing with a purpose in the new areas. The staff team also feel that it has made a huge difference to them as the areas are much more inviting and more enjoyable to be in.

We would like to say a huge Thank you to all the team from Barclays bank who made these changes possible. Without this type of help and funding we wouldn't be able to have made a difference as quickly as it would have taken longer to raise the funds to buy the resources to do one area at a time.

If anyone is aware of any companies or other banks that offer a similar project to Barclays we would really appreciate the opportunity to continue to make improvements to Caterpillar garden and the Sensory garden areas.

This term I will be having a sharp focus on individual and team professional development in order to celebrate achievements and good practice of practitioners but also to work through and support improvements to practice. This process will be centred fully around positive outcomes for children and how practitioners, teams and provision support the progress in their learning and development in the best possible ways.

The room coordinators and I will make judgements on the effectiveness of care, teaching, learning and assessment through every day practice. Practitioners will be observed in a variety of ways through the daily routines/aspects of their roles and together with this and our knowledge and experience as childcare professionals and managers we will support them to improve any weaknesses and praise good practice and achievements through an effective supervision process. If you have any feedback for individuals or teams that you feel will be helpful in this process then please do not hesitate to fill in an evaluation form (situated in the foyer or call into the office to give some verbal feedback)

Our overarching topic/theme this half term is entitled 'Magical Me' and 'My Fabulous Family and Fantastic Friends' This theme will give the children lots of opportunities to celebrate, find out about, talk and share experiences relating to themselves and their family/friends. It will include lots of fun activities and learning focused around bodies and senses, family, feelings, likes and dislikes and friendships. Please see room sections for further details.

Interest sheets will be given out over the next few weeks. Please support your child's continued learning and development by providing your child's Keyperson with as much valuable information as possible as this is vital in helping Keyperson's know your children's current interests from outside the setting; they can then use this information to offer resources to enhance interests.

Please remember to let us know if your child attends another setting as it is important that we work together to ensure there is continuity in their learning from setting to setting. Thank you.

ACTIVITIES IN THE CENTRE

Baby Room

Firstly, we hope you all had a great summer and enjoyed lovely holidays at home or abroad, or just had a great time with family and friends. For those of us at nursery, we had lots of fun outdoors when the weather was nice and when it wasn't so nice we enjoyed dressing up and pretending we were at the seaside in our costumes, playing in the sand and water indoors.

As we move into Autumn and start a new term, we will be looking forward to learning all about ourselves, our families and our home. We again ask for your continued support with the home learning program which is a great help with your child's developmental learning.

As the weather is going to be turning colder in the coming weeks and months, can we ask that babies have warm outdoor clothes and if possible outdoor shoes as we will still be playing outside in the garden as often as possible.

Thank you.

Michelle Wood
Baby Room Coordinator

Caterpillar Room

Getting busy with Caterpillars

The Caterpillar children have been busy learning about numbers and shapes; we have been creative with paintings. We enjoyed ball painting where we counted the number of rolls the painted ball should make across our paper and we became very messy. We made shape structures using our sensory shape blocks and got sticky making funny shape collages. We incorporate number language throughout play every day but we have had a week that focused on number recognition and reciting.

All of the children enjoyed our dinosaur topic. We pretended to dig up dinosaur bones in our planters outside, and we played dinosaur bingo and enjoyed our dinosaur small world.

What's next?

Over the next half term our overall topic is 'Magical Me'. We will be looking in depth at our characteristics and our bodies. We will be introducing the topic by looking at our body parts and seeing if we can name them (for example: arm, leg, knee etc). We will continue this by looking at what we use our body parts for, and then explore what similarities and differences we have with our peers, for example eye colour and hair colour, where we will then put it into a tally chart.

Our senses are a big part of learning and exploring at this age so we will be exploring each of our 5 senses through messy and creative play.

Also within this topic will be 'My fabulous family and fantastic friends'. We will look at our own families and the families of our peers, to see what similarities and differences we share regarding our home life and community. We will use group time and games to encourage friendships and to introduce our new 'Golden Rules'. These 'Golden Rules' will be a big part of our nursery day and will encourage sharing, taking turns and being kind to each other.

It would be a great help if all families could provide a family photo for our families board.

Thank you.

Emma Thistlewood
Caterpillar Room Coordinator

Butterfly Room

The butterfly team would like to welcome back all our pre-schoolers, and new starters. We hope everyone has had a wonderful summer and are ready for a new and exciting year. Over the next half term our topic will be 'Magical Me'. Our play and learning opportunities will include my body and senses, feelings/ like and dislikes, my home and our fantastic friends. The children will be taking part in many sensory experiences to explore their different senses and develop likes and dislikes. These include exploring sensory ice cubes, smelling herbs and touching various textured malleables. We will also be drawing self-portraits, writing our names, using musical instruments and music to explore our senses, categorising and counting features as well as using tally charts for hair and eye colour for our mathematical development. During carpet times, we will be discussing our likes, dislikes, experiences, friends, family and homes. As part of this we will be handing out home learning and asking parents to produce a family tree with their child.

We would like to say thank you for your continued support with our home learning activities. These are very valuable to us as a Key Person and the children enjoy seeing their work on display.

Note to all parents: could you please ensure that your child has slippers for indoors and suitable footwear for outdoor play ready for the change of weather. Could I also remind you that we do provide toothbrushes and toothpaste in order for your child to brush their teeth at nursery but we do need you to provide a case or top for the brush for health and hygiene reasons. Due to the growing size of the lost property box I would like to ask all parents if they could please check this and also where possible label your children's belongings.

Many thanks the butterfly team.

Launa Skelley
Butterfly Room Coordinator

Out of School Club

Welcome back. We hope you've all enjoyed your summer breaks. We have had a great holiday club this year with lots of fun trips such as Stockeld Park and York Maze. We would like to welcome the new starters and if you have any questions/queries please don't hesitate to ask. In a morning, we aim to finish serving breakfast at 8:30am to ensure we arrive at school on time so we would advise arriving before this time if breakfast is required.

Afterschool club is intended to be a fun place to relax after school. We provide a focussed activity each evening but these are flexible to the children's wishes at the time and may change. If your child has any interests or hobbies please feel free to encourage them to share any ideas so we can use them.

As the weather begins to become more wintery, we would encourage your child/ren to bring a pair of slippers/indoor shoes and a suitable outdoor pair as the sensory garden can become messy.

If you require extra sessions or to cancel sessions please keep us informed as the playground is busy and it is difficult to chase children who have left.

Thank you.

Katherine Beal
Out of School Coordinator

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL ROOMS

Holiday allowances 2015 - As we approach the end of the year, just a reminder that we offer 2 weeks of your child's weekly pattern at 50%, between January - December. To ensure this is adjusted on your monthly invoice please can you either complete a holiday allowance form which can be downloaded from our website or put your requested dates in writing. Once received, the deduction will be made on the next invoice that is produced. Invoices are produced by the 15th of month, for the month in advance.

Also, in addition, we do offer the option to take leave for the six week school holidays. It is a requirement to take the full 6 weeks to receive this holiday deduction. Notification for this should be made in writing by 15th June 2015, to take effect with July invoicing.

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 with the pattern we offer being 3 five hour blocks. 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.

Nursery Funding 2016-2017- we have received notification from the local authority that there are 41 weeks in the financial year 2016/17 and therefore we have been advised we need to add in a further 3 non funded weeks during this year as the local authority only pay funding for 38 weeks. It has been suggested that we add on additional non funded week before the May half term 2016, October half term 2016 and the February half term 2017. Therefore we are sharing this information now to ensure parents/carers have sufficient time to plan for these changes to the normal patterns.

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.

Gates and Doors - Please can we request that parents and carers support us in keeping all children safe by ensuring that room doors are closed behind you, when leaving the room at drop off or collection. Also with regards to the main front door, this should only be opened by a parent and carer to ensure children are not allowed unsupervised access to the outdoor main path. Once outside, we would ask that parents and carers take time to bolt the gate at the end of the path on entry and on exit. As a team, we do try to ensure the gate is closed if we see it has been left open but as you can appreciate, we are busy inside looking after the children and managing the centre's day-to-day business. Many Thanks.

Christmas Party- this year we are going to revisit the traditional Christmas Party, held at the Centre during the children's day-to-day sessions. We are going to hold several party days w/c 7th December to ensure all children are able to take part in the festive celebrations. We will have party games, food and a visit from a special person! Further details will follow.

Christmas Nativity - Every year we plan a nativity for the all the children to take part in, and perform this at Cawthorne Parish Church. We will start our rehearsals for this later in October.

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

We are looking at dates with the Church, and expect the performance to be wc 14th December. Further details will follow once this has been confirmed.

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.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The following provides detail of forthcoming events and key dates:

Oct 23rd		Inset Day Cawthorne School- No Out of School Service Pre school finishes for Half Term
Oct 26th-30th	N/A	October Half Term Holiday Club
Nov 2nd	N/A	Pre-school recommences Out of School recommences.
Nov 13th	N/A	Children in Need Come dressed as your favourite hero
Wc 7th Dec	tbc	Various Christmas Party sessions with special visitor
Wc 14th Dec	tbc	Nativity will be held in Cawthorne Church Date to be confirmed with Church
Dec 18th		Pre school finishes for Christmas
Dec 21-23rd		Holiday Club for Out of School
Dec 23rd	6pm	Centre closes at 6pm for Christmas
Jan 4th 2016	7.30am	Centre reopens for New Year

**Best Wishes,
Carol Hill,
Business Manager.**