

Newsletter

July 2008



Registered Charity No. 1027293

The Staff Team

Manager/ Child Protection and Safeguarding	Heather Clarke
Supervisor/Health and Safety Officer	Rita Attwell
Supervisor/Inclusion Officer	Carolyne Martin

Assistants – Paula Kitchener, Julie Palmer, Wendy Lewis, Julia Williams, Lesley Newcombe, Caraline Moore, Caroline Oake, Sarah Guile, Alison Denton- Brown, Lisa Taylor, Diane Dilloway, Sarah Naylor and Maria Woods
Bank Staff – Penny Woolford, Nicky Pratt

Congratulations to Wendy Lewis who has been promoted to Supervisor from September.

Sadly it is my duty to inform you that Paula Kitchener will be leaving at the end of term. Paula has been part of the fixtures and fittings for 14 years. She has been a chairperson on two separate occasions and has been a loyal member of staff who will be truly missed. Paula has accepted a new job at Southwater Junior School.

Trustees of Southwater Village Hall Pre-School

Chairman – Paul Bubb	Telephone: 734979
Treasurer – Eddie Adams	Telephone: 731168
Secretary – Ross McLean	Telephone: 732015

New Committee

We are still without trustees for the new committee that will take over in October. We urgently need a Chairperson and a secretary. Without these voluntary roles being filled Preschool would be forced to close. I have attached job descriptions for these roles. Please contact Heather Clarke immediately if you are interested. Any person serving on the preschool committee will be police checked.

Questionnaires

Thank you to all parents that have returned completed questionnaires and there is still time to return yours if you still have it at home. Your views and comments are very valuable and are respected and used to evaluate and review the care and education we offer for your children.

Some of the areas of care and education parents particularly like are:

- Friendliness of the staff
- The range of themes and activities
- The craft Activities
- Friendly and Warm atmosphere
- Friendly but professional establishment
- Knowing that my son is happy and safe and will come out with a smile on his face
- Dads Week

Some of the areas parents feel could improve the care and education are:

- It would be nice if you offer a lunch club to older children before they start school.
- An outside play area
- Better outdoor facilities, wendy house, slide etc.
- (Parking) safer for the children
- It would be nice to be briefly told how they got on after each session
- Parents evenings could be held once a term

As you are aware we aim to provide a fun, friendly, safe and warm environment for all your children to thrive and learn, and from your replies it looks like we are achieving this goal. Lots of thought and research is done by staff for the planned themes and topics whilst trying to meet children's interests at the same time. Dad's week was well supported and it is very pleasing to see it as a plus on the questionnaire replies.

We look very closely at areas we could improve on but some things are out of our control. A lunch club has been requested before but this would be very difficult to do. There is only a 30 minute gap between the morning and afternoon sessions with the rooms needing to be set up as well. However I have given this some extra thought and I have one or two ideas that will be discussed with staff and the new committee in October.

The outside play area is still being resolved but will hopefully be sorted through our solicitors very shortly. Unfortunately even when the play area is resolved we would be unable to have a wendy house etc. Physical toys such as skittles, the tunnel, hoops etc will be taken outside. At present children have access to tents, climbing frame and slide indoors. Children are taken outside during sessions for walks, to the play park, to use the parachute and so much more.

We feel we have done as much as we can regarding the parking at preschool. The No Parking bollards are placed outside daily and parking reminders are included in all newsletters. The County Council will not allow yellow lines to be painted along the length of the car park. Parents/Carers are responsible for parking their cars safely away from the entrance of preschool. If anyone has any other suggestions please let Heather Clarke know.

Keeping parents updated with children's development still needs to be improved for some parents. Some parents see the ways in which we keep them updated as strength but for others it can be improved on. Children receive a settling in report after 6 weeks. Parents can attend the AGM and speak to key workers at this meeting. Children's activity books go home termly and key workers are very approachable. Parents evenings are being worked on but these have proved costly with so many staff being paid. Currently we have 114 children so this could prove very difficult to organise an open evening to see that number of parents. I would like to remind parents that they can make appointments to come in and see key workers. Talking to all parents after every session would be impossible but staff will all be reminded to make sure they do talk to all key children parents at least once or twice every half term.

However if you do have any concerns please do come and see us and if you wish to see your child's activity book at any time please just ask. The best way to see how your child is doing is by coming in as a parent helper if you do not work.

Term Dates

Autumn Term 2008

Monday 8th September – Friday 12th December
(Half term 27th -31st October)
Christmas Party December 15th

SPRING TERM 2009

5th January – 3rd April (half term 16th – 20th February)

Themes

(Once Upon A Time)

Week Beginning:

8th September – Teddy Bears

15th September - Castles

22nd September – Princes and Princesses

29th September – Nursery Rhymes

6th October – Favourite Stories

13th October – Fairies, Elves and Pixies

20th October – Autumn

Parking - **REMINDER**

As you are more than aware parking is a problem outside pre-school. Children and cars do not mix. Please **DO NOT** Park on **either side** of the road along the whole of the entrance to the preschool car park or in the car park. This area must be kept clear so that there is a clear view to cross the road. Parents/Carers **must not** remove bollards to gain access to the car park.

Please use the overflow car park opposite the cricket club. It may take a few extra minutes to secure siblings in buggies and to walk down from the car park but you do not want to be responsible for a serious accident to a child?

Fees

All fees invoices will be coming home next week. These fees must be paid before the end of week two of the autumn term. If you wish to pay weekly you need to write to Lisa Taylor before the start of the Autumn term. Any fees not paid by Friday September 19th September could result in your child losing their place. Please note that when sending in fees please make sure your child's name is clearly marked on the envelope which should also be marked FEES. Do not send in fees for the attention of Heather Clarke.

Barnardo's Big Toddle

Thank you so much to all parents, family and friends that supported this event. You raised over £600 which is fantastic.

Snacks

Please make sure that you send in a piece of fruit **every time** your child attends pre-school for snack time and if your child will only eat certain fruit then please make sure you send that fruit in. We do not always have favourite fruits available. Thank you

Fund Raising

Thank you to parents and staff who helped with the preschool stall. Decorating biscuits was a great hit with the children. The colouring competition was also well supported and the winners were as follows:

- Age 2-3 years Siobhan Bridgewater
- Age 3-5 years Corinne Bridgewater
- Age 5 years plus Gracie Enticknap

Well done and Congratulations to all of them.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the film quiz. You all did really well but the winner with 97.5% was Debbie Fitzsimmons. Congratulations.

Sam Lanning

For and on behalf of the Fundraising Team

Vouchers and Tokens

This year you have done very well collecting both the Tesco and Sainsbury's vouchers. The Sainsbury's vouchers have now finished but if you have any Tesco vouchers we can bank these and use next time. We collected 6,407 Tesco vouchers and have ordered a new printer, steering wheels for role play, paint rollers, modelling tools and some mark making tools. With the 5,419 Sainsbury's vouchers collected we have ordered 2 cd players, a criss cross tunnel, pom poms, streamers and measuring spoons. Thank you everyone. The box top vouchers are on going and can be collected at any time.

Activity Books and Reports

Preschool children will be receiving their activity books and either settling-in report or moving into preschool plus report next week. Plus children will receive their activity books and their developmental records will be passed on to school. When preschool children return in September could you please send back the comments section from the report. Thank You.

Leavers' Show and Picnic – Monday 21st July

The children leaving us for school in September have met their new teachers and have visited their new schools. But before they go they will enjoy taking part in a show of song and dance and share a picnic with families and teachers. All **Preschool plus** children are to arrive at 10.15am for a 10.30am start. Please remember a lunch and singing voices! A reminder to parents that 2 adults per family are welcome but unfortunately we cannot accommodate siblings. Also, please note, no video cameras are allowed. Staff need to know well in advance if you are leaving your child without supervision so that we can arrange supervision and collection times.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very safe and happy summer holiday. Good luck and best wishes to the children starting at 'big school'. We know you will enjoy your new schools and will have happy times there. Don't forget us too soon!

Heather Clarke

Pre-School Manager

On Behalf of the staff and Committee

Telephone: (01403) 733 954 (during session times)