



# Newsletter

April 2008

We have all got our fingers crossed for a sunnier summer term than last year, especially with all the water activities we have planned!

## **New starters**

We welcome Charlie from North Waltham who has joined us this term. He has settled in remarkably quickly and particularly appreciates his snack.

## **Sainsbury's 'Active Kids' vouchers**

Keep these coming in we already have over 1500, equivalent to 1½ gym mats which is terrific progress. We have until 4<sup>th</sup> June to collect more.

## **Project**

This term our project is 'water'. We will be covering the water cycle, weather, measuring water, animals and plants that live in water, how we use water, properties of water and our reliance on water. Activities will include bubble painting, marbling, looking after plants, making a beach, lots of washing, making a siphon, reading 'The Rainbow Fish' and lots more. A spare top at school will be very useful if clothes get wet.

## **New Outdoor Area**

Some of you may have noticed the new area we have fenced off for an additional outdoor area. This new area will become part of the environment during the morning where the children can go to and from when they like as long as the weather will allow. It will contain water based activities like washing and weighing water and other activities that could get quite messy.

## **Baby week**

During the week beginning the 19<sup>th</sup> May, we are planning a 'baby week'. We thought it may be quite fun, as a few of our children are soon to have or recently had a new sibling. We will have a table set up with lots of objects associated with babies, do activities associated with babies, welcome babies coming to visit, have a 'guess the baby' quiz as well as making time lines of our lives.

If you could find pictures of your children as babies and others for every year to date that would be very helpful. The children will then be able to see how they have all grown and developed over time. The teachers will also be bringing in pictures of themselves to see if the children can guess who it is.

## **School Photographer**

Steve Wood our school photographer will be coming on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June at 9.00. Everyone is welcome including siblings. We are also hoping to have a school photo taken so the more of you who can come the better.

## **Feedback forms**

A very big thank you to those of you who returned the feedback forms. Some of you had obviously spent some time considering the points and provided us with a good picture as well as things to consider. We were very pleased with all the very positive feedback. Almost every form said we provided a caring, happy and calm atmosphere, and many said they liked us because we encouraged independence, social and life skills. We were very pleased too about the many positive comments about the staff. After reading through some forms after a meeting some of us had trouble getting out of the door our heads had swollen so much!

Not many comments about how we could improve, but we will work on providing more positive feedback, more full days, warm drinks when cold and providing provision for primary aged children. As a Montessori setting we base everything on reality so we do not do dressing up as 'Spiderman' for example, but we do have a growing amount of traditional costumes and occupational outfits the children wear when we are looking at a particular subject. For example Chinese costumes during Chinese New Year. We will do more of this in the future.

## **Places**

Places for the next 2 years are filling up now quite quickly. If you would like to register a child please ask Marianne for a registration form or download one from the website. Your child is only on the list once a completed registration form has been returned.

If your child turns 2 in the summer term we may not be able to accommodate them until the autumn term, as any spaces taken in the summer term have to be kept for the previous 2 terms.

## **Reception year and beyond**

Many of you have enquired about a Montessori reception year and primary schools on the feedback forms. We do currently offer places for children who wish to stay with us for the reception year and already have reception children booked for September 2009. This is an alternative to the large reception classes often offered at primary schools. Children are able to continue building their skills they learnt in Foundation year 1 in all areas. Remember your child is eligible for the early education grant until the term after they turn 4. If you'd like further information about what the children will do please ask.

Unfortunately there is currently no local Montessori primary school. This is something we are considering for the future.

## **Visitors**

We are always looking for parents, people from the community with a particular skill or talent they are happy to show the children. This could be almost anything from music, cookery and painting to dentistry. So don't be shy.

### **Dates for your diary**

1<sup>st</sup> May Polling day school closed

5<sup>th</sup> May Bank Holiday

19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> May 'Baby Week'

26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> May Half term

6<sup>th</sup> June Photographer

11<sup>th</sup> June Parent's evening for leavers TBC

3<sup>rd</sup> July Treehouse Theatre-Mother Goose

10<sup>th</sup> July Sports day

11<sup>th</sup> July End of term party

### **Contact with the School**

If you would like to discuss your child, have any queries or would like some information we can talk briefly at the beginning of the day, we are however always free to talk for longer at the end of the session.

I am always happy to be contacted through e-mail, but please avoid telephoning me at the weekend unless it is urgent.

If you'd like to stay with your child for a while in the morning you are always very welcome, some children may appreciate it especially if a sibling is on the way or just arrived.

Best wishes, Marianne.