



Registered Charity No: 1128799

Dear parents

We are fast approaching the first anniversary of our move to the new premises. The year has been a busy one and the children have thoroughly enjoyed their new surroundings.

This term we have been exploring our senses. The children have been tasting new fruits and vegetables – mango, pineapple, avocado and radish to name a few. We have been baking cakes, making musical instruments and smelling socks!! (with smells such as onion, garlic and lavender). The bugs were a massive hit with the children. Most were eager to touch and hold them (although the staff were not so keen!!). We have put some photographs of the visit on our website – www.theholliespreschool.co.uk. This week the children will be going onto the school field and into the wild area on listening walks. Next week we will be visited by a guide dog and will be talking to the children about ways in which he helps his owner – please see door for details.

Thank you to all the parents that returned the questionnaires we sent out earlier in the term. We received lots of positive feedback, which was fantastic. The main issue that arose was the possibility of a shelter in the car park area. Unfortunately, after consultation with Mr Coulson, we are unable to have a fixed shelter because of it attracting youths onto the school property. In previous years this has caused vandalism and break ins within the school. We faced the same problem when looking at providing shade in the play area during the summer – hence the shade sails that have to be taken down each night. We are unable to open the doors early because of staff taking the school children over to the school. However, when staff return and we are fully staffed we do open the doors early if the weather is bad.

Another point raised was parents not able to get in through the gate – we are looking into having a bell on the gate.

Some parents wanting to extend their child's learning at home were unsure about specific numbers or letters we are covering at Hollies. We do not cover any letters or numbers specifically but have opportunities for the children to observe them all around the setting – such as posters, jigsaws, books etc. We use a wide range of resources to encourage letter/number recognition and counting/writing skills. These include jigsaws, books, games, sand trays, water with brushes, painting, a variety of drawing tools. All are easily accessible for the children and are used during focus groups. Parents can support their child at home by playing games such as 'I spy', using opportunities such as shopping to encourage counting skills, looking at letters on signs/ numbers on doors etc and having writing resources available for their children to use. We will be putting a few ideas together in conjunction with Mrs Hughes (Early Years Foundation Stage lead in school) – this will be available after the Easter holidays.

We will be holding a parents evening on Wednesday 28th April so you can come along to look at your child's profile and have a chat with their key person. Letters will be sent out after the Easter holidays. If you would like to speak to your child's key person at any other time during the year please let us know so this can be arranged.

New parents meetings are held half-termly and parents are invited to come along just before their child begins to attend the Hollies. We feel these meetings are very important as we provide a lot of information about Hollies including daily routines, all about the early years foundation stage, the key worker system etc. It also gives parents a chance to meet some of the committee members. If you were unable to attend the meeting before your child started at



Hollies, please feel free to come along to another meeting – a notice will be placed on the entrance door as each meeting approaches.

For those of you whose children have school dinner, we will endeavour to write how much they have eaten in their diary, so you can monitor their intake and preferences.

If your child is being collected by another parent or grandparent etc please inform the member of staff taking the register as you enter the building so the information can be passed on.

To ease the congestion at the end of the day the children will be ready with their coats on for pick up. Any letters will be placed in their reading bags. At present we are unable to do this at lunch time pick up, but when the session times change in September we will get the children ready in the same way and they will be sat at the table ready for pick up.

Date for your diary – Monday 10th May – there will be a bag to school collection so please save any clothes, bedding, curtains, shoes, handbags etc.

As part of our Fathers day and celebrating the family week we will be inviting special people into Hollies to spend some time with the children. This will be during the week beginning 14th June and we will welcome dads, mums, granddads, aunties etc. Please let us know if you would like to visit.

Mystery reader – if you would like to come along and read a story please speak to Karen, Bridget or Debbie.

Admin Bits from Liz:

Over the last weeks I have sent you quite a bit of information regarding fees, session times and governments vouchers (free entitlement). The new session times and fee increases start in September 2010, until then we are operating as usual and fees remain the same. We just wanted you to have this information when you were booking for the next academic year. The website is up to date with all the information and documents. If anyone had not noticed the new session times for September 2010 are:

Morning	9:00am-11:30am
Lunch	11:30am-12:30pm
Afternoon	12:30pm-3:00pm
3:30 pick-up	3:00pm-3:30pm

Breakfast and Afterschool remain unaffected.

We have quite a few children on waiting lists for the April term, if you have not heard from me unfortunately you are still on the waiting list and I will let you know if a session becomes available.

The April term is extremely booked up so if you have any holiday in the April term please could you keep me informed. Email is easier but a letter would be sufficient. I just need to know the first date they will not be attending and the first date they will be back in. All available sessions will be advertised on the door and if anyone is interested it will be a first come first served basis as usual.

We hope you all have a lovely Easter and look forward to welcoming you back after the holiday.