



January 2014

Happy New Year to you all!

We would like to welcome our new children and families who are starting with us this term; we look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Christmas

The staff would like to say a big thank you for the cards and presents they received. Christmas week is always so chaotic it is very difficult to thank people properly for their kindness.

We would like to thank everyone who made the Christmas Party happen, especially Father Christmas and Magic Ian! What stars!!

If you had a new mobile number for Christmas, please make sure you pass it on to us.

Please remember to share any information about your child, events, or changes at home with your key person or Belinda.

Snow Days

Inclement Weather - If the weather forecast is for heavy snow – our policy is to close if the main school closes. Therefore please listen to the local radio bulletins or keep an eye on the Gloucestershire county council website here - <http://ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/closedschools>. If St Mary's School is stated as closed, then we will be too!

Reminders

As the weather turns colder, please send your child with a warm waterproof coat, gloves and hat to ensure we can enjoy the garden even in the colder weather.

Please remember that we need 4 weeks' notice if you are leaving us. Please ask staff for a Notice to Leave Form.

You are welcome to come along for a session with your child if you want to. Help is always welcome!

Term 3 Planning

This term the emphasis is on shops. The Playroom will be converted into different shops! Please could you keep your packages to bring in and stock the shops! Cereal boxes, egg boxes, fish finger packets, etc. You get the idea! We will be talking about recycling and also doing junk and sticky! The children will hopefully be walking over to Tesco for a visit. Helpers will be needed to escort the children safely. Look out for notices in Playgroup.



St. Mary's Playgroup
CHURCHDOWN

Sickness

Just a reminder - Please remember, children should not attend playgroup if they are unwell, no matter how much they wish to come!

If your child is poorly, please ring into the playgroup and leave us a message to let us know what is wrong with your child. If your child has been unwell in the night and required medicine, please keep them at home. Diarrhoea and vomiting means stay away for 48 hours, even if it was only one episode. One sick child means several sick children and also sick staff!!

FUNDING FOR 3 YEAR OLDS AND 4 YEAR OLDS

Funding starts this term for those children who were 3 years old between 1st September and 31st December 2013.

If you have not already given us a photocopy of your child's birth certificate, please do so as soon as possible.

Parents of all funded children (including those parents already receiving funding) are required to sign a form stating your child's name, address, date of birth, and number of sessions. These forms need signing every term and the turnaround time is very short. Once they are given to you to sign, please do so immediately. Do not take them away, if possible. It's a problem every term to get them back in time to send in. You must put all settings that your child attends and all hours that you attend.

Further to several queries about forms and invoices last term -the council decides what funding goes where, not us and not you. If your child attends two settings and attends for more than 15 hours, **you will receive a bill from both settings for the extra hours. The next payment run is 10th March, so please look out for your Hours Over Entitlement Invoice around then.**

CHILDCARE VOUCHERS

We are registered with:-

Edenred

Computershare

Kiddivouchers

Sodexo

If you wish to pay your child's fees by this method, please ensure that you e-mail playgroup when this has been done.

St Mary's Playgroup
Registered Charity Number: 1097701



St. Mary's Playgroup
CHURCHDOWN

Lunchtimes

Now that the older children are attending all day, here are some tips for lunchboxes!!

Top Tips for Storage

Use an insulated lunchbox.

Freeze a carton of juice the night before then use it as a freezer pack.

Avoid packing warm food into the lunchbox.

Refrigerate fruit before packing.

Lunch boxes or bags will be stored in the trolley.

PLEASE LABEL YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH BOX

The emphasis of our lunch is:

- to promote healthy eating
- to educate the children on the importance of washing their hands before eating
- to promote good table manners

All in a relaxed and happy atmosphere.

Once the children are settled they are given half an hour to eat their lunch, followed by free play.

All children eat at different paces and therefore to enable the children to finish their packed lunch, we ask parents/carers to provide a realistic portion of food to eat in their lunch boxes for the time provided.

The children will be encouraged to eat their food in a particular order, e.g. sandwiches, dairy, fruit and then their treats such as cereal bars.

Healthy Lunch box check list

For a nutritionally balanced lunch, have you included....

- A portion of starchy food and a lean protein filling e.g. wholegrain bap, sliced wholemeal bread, chapatti, pitta pocket, pasta or rice with cheese, ham, chicken?
- A portion of fruit and vegetables e.g. an apple, satsuma, grapes, cherry tomatoes, carrot or cucumber sticks?
- Some dairy e.g. yoghurt, fromage frais, cubes of cheese?
- A drink. When choosing a drink for a lunch box we recommend water, fresh juice, sugar free squash or milk shakes. We would appreciate it if children are not provided with fizzy drinks

❖ Sausages and grapes should be cut in half lengthways to prevent choking.

Fresh drinking water will be available at all snack and meal times.



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FEE PAYMENTS

Several fees were very late being paid last term. Some are still outstanding. Please could you ensure you are up to date and pay immediately if you are not? Invoices have now been issued for this term until Easter. Reminders were left at Playgroup in November for unpaid fees. If these continue to be outstanding, 10% will be added as late payment charge and consideration will be given to suspending your child until payment is made. Please see Unpaid Fees policy for more details.

If you wish to pay your fees directly into our bank account, please speak to Sharon for our details. Please remember to send us an e-mail once you have made the payment.

Getting Ready for 'Big School'

In order for us to start preparing the children for the transition to school, please could you bring in a t-shirt and a pair of shorts, any colour, so that we can start changing for PE? They won't need daps, all tops and shorts should be labelled with your child's name, along with the bag they are brought in. We need these in as soon as possible please.

Diary Dates

Inset Day	-	Monday 6th January 2014
Term Three Begins	-	Tuesday 7th January 2014
Term Three Ends	-	Friday 14th February 2014
Inset Day	-	Monday 24th February 2014
Term Four Begins	-	Tuesday 25th February 2014
Term Four Ends	-	Friday 4th April 2014



St. Mary's Playgroup
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