



St. Mary's Playgroup
CHURCHDOWN

Term 5 2013 - Newsletter.

Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers.

We are now collecting Sainsbury's vouchers, which are available in store until 22nd May 2013. All vouchers that we collect will be redeemed for equipment and games. The collection box is on the signing in desk.

Snack Donations.

We thank you for all snack donations received. We are just about covering the costs of the food provided. If you would like to bring in fruit or snack items for the children to try, these will also be very welcome.

Fees

Thank you for your co-operation in paying the fees in advance as required by our policies. Some fees are still outstanding, so could these be paid as soon as possible please?

As of 1st September 2013 fees will be increasing to fall into line with the County Council rates/inflation and the ratio requirements provided by the Government.

The new prices are:

Children under 3 £4.00 per hour (£10 per 2.5 hour session)

Children over 3 £3.75 per hour (hours over funding entitlement)

Please be aware that we do still charge even if your child is ill or on holiday. We have to provide the staff for the ratios that your child would be included in; therefore unfortunately we still have to charge.

Please speak to Sharon, Belinda or Arthur (Treasurer) if you are experiencing any difficulty with payments.

'Free for 3 and 4' funding.

Please could parents read their funding forms carefully before signing them?

There were a large number of errors that Sharon had to chase up this term.

There is a very short space of time between receiving the forms from the



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council and when they have to be back in. They then have to be checked, another form completed with all those details on and then scanned on to the computer and emailed back the council. It is a long process. Sessions had not been put on forms, dates of birth and addresses were missing, sessions that Sharon was unaware children were attending were put on the forms, etc. So to help save time, please check carefully and make amendments as necessary.

Fundraising Events

As a registered charity, we do need a regular amount of funds to be raised for the survival of the Playgroup. Support for the last few organised events has been very poor. A lot of time and effort goes into organising these events and it is disheartening when our efforts go in vain. This is your Playgroup and your child that is missing out on vital things like paint, paper, crayons, books and toys, etc. It was discussed at the committee meeting this week and we have decided to ask for a voluntary donation from each family every year to cover extra costs. We will be asking for £10 for each of the three terms. This money will then be put towards resurfacing our outside play area with soft spongy surface. Fundraising events will then be scaled back to a termly sponsored event. If you would like to comment on this decision, please speak to Kim, our Committee Chair.

Spring Fayre

The Spring Fayre will be held on Sunday 12th May from 11.30 until 2pm. A separate letter has been sent out asking for donations as well as help at the event. Please come along and help support us as well as having a fun time!

Sickness and Illness

Please be advised that if your child has suffered from Diarrhoea and/or vomiting, they must not return until **48** hours after the last symptoms and they are feeling well enough to return. Also if your child needs to take Calpol, etc, they are probably not well enough to attend Playgroup! Thank you for your co-operation regarding any spreading of infection and recurring illness. It is also a requirement of the funding that we account for any session not attended by a funded child. **Therefore we are asking for you to please bring in a quick note when your child has not attended Playgroup to explain why.**



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Competition Time!

This term we are holding a growing competition. The children will be growing a sunflower seed each which will be brought home to continue growing. They will also have a form to complete as they measure how tall their plant has grown each week. They will be returned at the end of term and the tallest plant wins! Get those green fingers ready!

COLLECTING AND DROPPING OFF

We have taken note of comments on the questionnaires that the doors were not being opened on time. We have now put the clock forward!!! In return we are asking that the children are collected on time. There is a small window between sessions for the staff to clear up, set up for the next session and have lunch. If lateness becomes a regular habit, we will start charging for extra time. We are not insured to have children on the premises outside of session times.

SUN PROTECTION

I know it seems unlikely, but if we get any hot, or even warm, sunny summer days, please apply sun block to your child and bring sun hats before coming to Playgroup. Also please ensure your child wears something that covers their shoulders. It is not possible for us to apply suncream to all the children before going out as it would take too long and we have allergies to consider. We are working towards our Sun Safe Nursery Award. More information to follow.

PARENT MORNINGS AND AFTERNOONS

Parents are always welcome to spend a session/s with us. This is an opportunity for you to come along and see your child at play. You can join in the activities or simply watch; it's up to you.

If you would like to spend a session with your child, please let a member of staff know which day you would like to come.



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MONDAY 6th MAY – PLAYGROUP WILL BE CLOSED DUE TO BANK HOLIDAY

2013 Term Dates

Term 5

Term Starts: Monday 8th April 2013

Bank Holiday: Monday 6th May 2013

Term Ends: Friday 24th May 2013

Term 6

Inset Day: Monday 3rd June 2013

Term Starts: Tuesday 4th June 2013

Term Ends: Thursday 18th July 2013

(After the end of term parties)

September Sessions

Please could those parents returning in September, complete the session request forms for Sharon? We can then make sure you get what you want before we accept extra children in to the setting.

Committee

And while we are thinking about September, it's that time again when the majority of the present committee will be moving on as their child goes to 'big school'. Please have a think about joining the committee and becoming a part of the driving force that runs your Playgroup!! Speak to Kim or Sharon about what's involved or come along to a meeting to see what it is all about.

Photos

The photographer will be in playgroup on Friday 17th May. Although this is a pre-school session, the younger Playgroup children will be invited to come in earlier if you would like your child's photo taken. Speak to Belinda about times.



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Summer Trip

The annual summer to Cotswold Farm Park is now being organised. Keep an eye out for more information.

Questionnaires

Thank you to those parents who returned their questionnaires. A raffle was held and the bottle of wine goes to Selina, Sophie Edgar's mum. It will be in Playgroup next week for collection. Well done!

The results were mainly very positive. It's lovely to hear that you and, especially your children, are very happy with us. There were some issues that were raised at the committee meeting.

- We have asked the school to provide us with a landline so that we can have a proper phone and internet service. The mobile we currently use is switched off before 9 am because the Breakfast Club use the building and there are no Playgroup staff on site until just before that to answer a phone.
- Parents evenings and progress information is always a big issue. When these have been arranged before, no one has attended. You are always welcome to speak to a member of staff about your child.
- The website has not been updated because no one has volunteered to take it on. Hopefully we now have someone who will have a go! So watch this space! www.playgroupstmarys.org.uk

Hopefully that has addressed the issues raised. Please speak to Kim, (chairperson) or Belinda if you have any other issues.

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