

Preschool 345 News

December 2015



Parents/carers, please feel free to chat with staff or committee members if you need any information or have a question. We will all be happy to help or to point you towards someone who can. Goodbye and good luck to those children who are leaving us this term – Alfie, Harry, Beth, James, Taliya & Ethan.

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Our Christmas Fair on Saturday 12th December was a great success. Our fabulous children kicked the event off with a wonderful performance. Families who attended found festive games, crafts and stalls plus delicious food and drink on offer. The raffle was packed with fabulous prizes and Santa himself popped in for a visit too.

The money raised will be put to very good use, purchasing equipment for Preschool.

A massive thank you to everyone who supported our fair – by donating, baking, volunteering, buying raffle tickets and, of course, coming along on the day. All of our children will benefit from your efforts.



SOME DIARY DATES

END OF TERM - Friday 18th December 2015

FIRST DAY OF SPRING TERM – Tuesday 5th January 2016

INSET DAY – 3rd May 2016



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM took place on Friday 4th December.

THANK YOU to the many parents and carers who took the time to attend, and contribute to, the meeting. From initially wondering whether the meeting would be quorate, we ended up with unprecedented numbers and a need for extra chairs and coffee cups!

The committee for the coming year was elected and reports were presented by Tina, Trudi, Cath and Rich (our co-chairs during 2015).

A copy of the minutes of the meeting will soon be available on the parents/carers table if you wish to read further details.

- Our newsletter is published once every half term
- You should receive a paper copy and an email version during the last week of each half term
- Spare copies are also made available on the parent/carer information table



Here's the return of our **STAFF PROFILE** feature - a chance to learn a little more about one of our fabulous staff team. This time our victim/volunteer is **Angela**...



What are your roles and responsibilities? As a key worker for children at preschool I am responsible for helping those children settle in when they initially start with us and then planning activities to help those children develop interests, skills and friendships. I am also responsible for food hygiene at 345, organising snack and dealing with any allergies the children may have to ensure nobody ends up eating or drinking something that will make them poorly. I also put together the parent helper snack rota. At 345 we encourage all parents/carers and grandparents who may have an hour to spare one morning to come in and help out with snack. It's a great opportunity to come in and see how your child/grandchild enjoys preschool and to meet their little friends too. So, if you fancy helping out, please come and see me and we can arrange it and I'll show you what to do.

How long have you worked here? How do you come to be here? I have been at 345 now for 13 years and started helping out when my own children attended - they left to go to school and I stayed and began working here properly.

Best thing about working at 345s? The thing I enjoy the most is getting to play every day! Children learn through play and it's great to see the children learn lots of skills and see their confidence grow.

Your top tip for working with/being with children? My top tip is to encourage children in whatever they are doing and to just have fun. By encouraging them you build confidence. During snack time we encourage the children to wash up their own cup and bowl which helps give the children some independence. They always enjoy the praise we give them when they've done this task and they leave the snack room not only with a full tummy but a sense of achievement that they've done something for themselves.

Help In Preschool

So far this year we have had just three parents help in the snack room... Having mums, dads, grandparents or carers helping at pre-school gives the children a number of advantages:

- Seeing their own parents involved in the pre-school shows children that their parents are interested and think education is important — and that they have a part to play in it. It makes your child feel special because you are there
- Children in pre-school encounter a wide range of adults, each with their own different skills and backgrounds
- It helps us to maintain a high adult to child ratio (though parent helpers aren't counted in the official ratio), enabling us to provide individual care and attention to each child's needs and development
- Parents who help in the group get to know what goes on and are in the best position to pick up on pre-school learning at home
- Watching their own child busy among the pre-school activities and getting on with other children can give parents new insight into children's needs and abilities



PLEASE see Angela or any member of staff if you could lend a hand.

HERE ARE TWO WAYS YOU COULD HELP TO RAISE VALUABLE FUNDS FOR PRESCHOOL 345, A NONPROFIT CHARITY...



Do your online shopping via thegivingmachine.co.uk - Amazon, John Lewis, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Next and 300+ more online retailers to choose from. Every purchase helps to support us. The site is easy to use. Once you are on it, register as a new user and you can then install the Shop and Give reminder on your computer. Once installed, it tells you every time you are on a site that gives some of its profits to Preschool. By clicking on the reminder, any shopping you do will generate a donation for Preschool. Easy and much appreciated!



Take part in a sponsored event (bike rides, marathons, fun runs etc.) and name us as your chosen charity. Let us know and we will help you to spread the word and gain sponsors.

All our fund-raising efforts buy resources which enhance and extend the children's experiences and learning.

TATTY TED'S ADVENTURES

– Catherine's bit



Tatty is looking forward to putting his furry paws up over the Christmas holidays after a very busy term spending time with some of the children from preschool.

One of Tatty's special memories from this term was when he got to stroke a baby donkey. Tatty went on a visit to the farm with Elsa and her sisters. As well as meeting the donkey and lots of other animals, Tatty also got to sit on a tractor.

When Tatty visited Daisy's house he had a fantastic time making cakes! Tatty then got to do something he liked even more - eat the cakes!! However, when Tatty ate one more than he should have he ended up with teddy tummy ache!! Daisy helped make Tatty feel much better though by giving him lots of hugs.

Tatty enjoyed even more hugs when he went to stay with Henry. On bonfire night Tatty got a bit scared by all the loud bangs, so Henry very kindly shared his ear defenders with Tatty and gave him lots of hugs so he wouldn't be scared! Tatty loved that and thought Henry was very kind.

Tatty is looking forward to hanging his stocking up on Christmas Eve and tells us he will be leaving out a carrot for Rudolph and the other reindeers as he knows how hungry they get delivering presents.

He wants to say a big goodbye to the children who will be leaving preschool at Christmas to start school in January. He told us he knows they will all be brilliant, that their new teachers will think they are amazing and that they'll have lots of fun learning many new things and making even more friends.

Lindsey's behaviour bit - If you have any concerns about behaviour please speak to your child's key person or Lindsey, who is our very own behaviour support lead.

It's nearly Christmas! Whilst grown-ups think "Where are we going to find the time?!", for children it can seem like a very long wait. The build up to the big day could well have an impact on behaviour, even for very young children who don't quite know what all the excitement is actually about.

Christmas doesn't *have* to be lots of late nights, loads of chocolate, demanding presents, and overexcitement (I'm talking about the children here) There are also lots of great learning opportunities to involve and engage young children - mark making, using tools (e.g. scissors), counting, addition, language relating to money, reading...

You could:

- Write a letter to Santa, cutting out pictures from catalogues (not too many!)
- Write a shopping list of presents your child wants to buy for family members. There are a range of pound shops (other retail outlets are available) which make the calculations easier, counting the items and talking about money
- Wrap presents and write labels
- Make Christmas cards (glitter glue might be better than actual glitter for cleaning up purposes!)
- Take a trip to the library to look at a range of Christmas books

Remember it's the season of goodwill not the season to get stressed so have a lovely Christmas with your little ones who one day quite soon won't be so very little.

Language tips

Mandy is our very own Language Leader. She regularly attends networking events and courses so she can keep up to date with the latest research and ideas to help develop your child's language skills. If you have any worries or questions please feel free to speak to her or your child's key person.



Communication is the sending of information from one person to another and can be verbal (talking to each other) and non-verbal (facial expressions) so, when talking with your children, your facial expressions should reflect your conversation. Children learn how to communicate by watching and listening to adults.

When communicating with children come down to their level, verbally and physically...

Verbally - use age-appropriate language that children can easily understand, such as 'no hitting your sister' as opposed to 'it is not acceptable to hit your sister'. Preschool aged children find it difficult to sit through long speeches, so a good rule is to speak to them for no longer than 30 seconds at a time, giving them time to take in the information and always mean what you say.

Physically - come down to their level. Giving them eye contact shows you are interested in what they are saying and they can learn to read your facial expressions.

Have fun listening to and talking with your children, you will be surprised at what they have to say - they surprise me everyday.

Mandy x



HEALTH & SAFETY ADVICE

Angela has asked that we ask parents to please cut up grapes in your child's lunch box, especially for under 3's. We don't wish to alarm or scare parents however a recent news report (ITV 15.10.15) told the story of a 2 year old boy who died after choking on a grape.

Advice from Child Accident Prevention Trust
<http://www.capt.org.uk/safety-advice/how-stop-your-child-choking>
states that:

'Toddlers are still learning to chew, swallow and breathe, so they can easily choke on food, especially if they're not concentrating. Food, even something as small as a grape can cause a toddler to choke'.

Please, please label your child's coat etc.

Just imagine trying to find one child's coat among 30, especially when they say "Yes" to all of them...



Richard's Recipe Corner

Easy Peasy Mince Pies

Hello and welcome to this festive newsletter's recipe corner.

This issue's recipe is an easy peasy version of a festive classic. Maybe something to do with the children during the Preschool holidays? Enjoy....

INGREDIENTS (makes approximately 24)

Pack of short crust sheet pastry

Half a 822g jar of mincemeat (I use Lidl as it's the best I have tried)

Small amount of butter

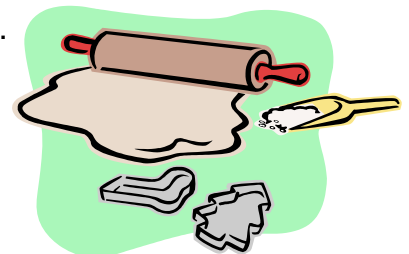
Small amount of milk

Small amount of sugar

You can, of course, make your own pastry and mincemeat but the point of this recipe is to make it as easy as possible.

METHOD:

- Preheat the oven to around 180-200°C.
- Use the butter to grease two 12 bun baking tray.
- Roll out the pastry as thinly as possible and cut out the bases using a pastry cutter.
- Place the bases in the baking tray and lightly press down.
- This is when the kids can get involved – let them fill up the bases with mincemeat (do not overfill).
- Roll out the rest of the pastry and let kids cut out stars/shapes for the tops and place them on the mincemeat.
- Lightly dab the stars/shapes with milk and sprinkle sugar over them.
- Place the mince pies in the oven until they brown nicely (about 10 mins).
- Pop them out of the baking tray and leave to cool on a wire rack.



Easy Peasy!
Have a wonderful Christmas.