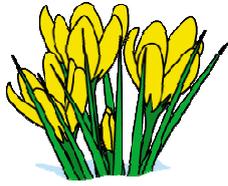


# Balham Nursery School & Children's Centre

## Newsletter - Spring Term 2017



Wow – it's hard to believe that this is the first newsletter of 2017 – how time flies!

### PSFA

#### **Christmas Charity Evening**

Thank you for supporting the Christmas charity evening. You might be interested to know that we raised £1516.50 and the night was a huge success. The PSFA have generously given us funds for next year's children's Christmas activities and the remainder will be shared between 'Care for the Family' and a donation for BNSCC towards the refurbishment of a new family kitchen upstairs. A BIG thank you goes to all those PSFA members for their hard work, commitment and time!

#### **What's been going on?**

Since returning in January we have been delighted at how well children have settled back into the nursery - their growing confidence and sense of belonging is really shining through. We continue to support those children who find it a little hard to say goodbye to family members through extra nurturing time and thinking imaginatively about what might comfort and support them. Looking at their memory books and using the digital camera are popular options. We have a few new children who are in the early stages of settling. Children have been developing their interest in story telling all over the nursery, whether in the block area or out in the garden where many of them are currently enjoying acting out traditional stories. We have recently celebrated Chinese New Year and Australia Day – please do have a look at what is going on!



#### **Balham Book Day**

We will be celebrating our very own Book Day on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**. We ask children NOT to come dressed as a favorite story character as we know this can create a lot of work for parents and can also result in many superheroes in school which is actually hard for the children to handle in a large group. There will be lots of opportunities for children to work with a variety of books and materials and we will continue to support their interests in developing their own costumes, characters and story ideas! Staff may be appearing as a variety of characters and will be telling lots of stories too! If you have some free time to come in to read your child's favorite story with a small group of children, we would be very grateful to you and this could be the start of you popping in regularly if you would like. Please speak with your child's teacher or key person to arrange a time.



#### **CAN YOU HELP?**

**We are looking for a holiday home for our lovely guinea pigs Rio and Rosie as well as Jamie the tortoise while we are closed over Half Term.**

**If you are able to help out please speak with Hollie in Reception or a member of staff.**



## Dates for Diary

Parent/Teacher Conferences are going to be held the week of 20<sup>th</sup> March. Sign-up sheets will be put up outside each class about two weeks before. Do please sign up to meet your child's class teacher (Nicola/ Jo in Back Class, Dee in Front Class and Fiona in the Garden Room) on one of these days. The school pays for supply teacher cover in order to release teachers from the classroom so PLEASE, PLEASE let Reception know if you are unable to attend an appointment you have booked so that someone else can take your place and the cost is not wasted. Thank you.

## Clarification on leaving the building, opening and closing times

**End of sessions** - We open the doors for collection at **11.25am** in the morning and **3.10pm** in the afternoon. We make a concerted effort to make sure the doors are open promptly so that parents can complete their school runs successfully!

We aim to close the door again just after **11.30am and 3.15pm**. It really is important we are able to close the door as soon as possible to secure the building and move on to the next stage of the nursery day. Just after 11.30am staff begin lunch with the children or go to lunch themselves. Just after 3.15pm staff go straight into a planning session where we complete the very important task of deciding what children will be doing the next day, discussing any significant issues and organising resources.

As you can see the school runs to quite a strict timetable in order to ensure we are making the most of the time we have in order to support the children. We would ask for your support in allowing us to maintain the flow of the day by arriving and leaving the building as promptly as possible. Of course, when a parent and staff member would like to discuss something at length then we will always make this a priority and this may mean that one or two families remain in the building a little while longer.

When the side door is open please exit this way, **the main door should not be used as a short cut.**

We try to ensure a smooth flow of traffic through the school as if everybody is entering and exiting the building in the same way it allows us to know that the building is as secure as possible at all times.

**Late arrivals** - Please ensure you inform Reception that your child has arrived in school so that they can mark them on the register and lunch register. **It is really important that your child comes to school on time everyday to minimise disruption and to encourage good school routines.**

**Late collection** - We do understand that from time to time everybody finds themselves held up and running late. If you are late to collect or leave the building then please ask a member of Reception to open the buggy park if needed and exit through the main door.

If you know that you will be late please do give us a ring as this allows us to explain to your child what is happening and minimise their confusion and concern. When you arrive please collect your child from reception where a member of staff will be supporting them.

## **Travelling to School!**

**We really want all our children and parents to travel to school safely, so this means making sure you do not park on the yellow zig zag lines directly outside the school gates. This is really important to ensure everyone's safety at drop off and pick up times.**

**Please also ensure that after entering and leaving the front garden you shut the green gate behind you so we are secure at all times.**

**Thank you for your cooperation.**

**Don't forget to visit our website and follow us on twitter to get regular updates**

Website: <https://balham-nursery.wandsworth.sch.uk/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/bnscc>

## Term dates – 2017

	First Day	Last Day
Spring 1	<b>Wed 4 Jan</b>	<b>Fri 10 Feb</b>
Half Term	Mon 13 Feb	Fri 17 Feb
Spring 2	<b>Mon 20 Feb</b>	<b>Fri 31 Mar</b>
Term Break	Mon 3 Apr	Tue 18 Apr
Summer 1	<b>Wed 19 Apr</b>	<b>Fri 26 May</b>
Half Term	Mon 29 May	Fri 2 Jun
Summer 2	<b>Mon 5 Jun</b>	<b>Thur 20 Jul</b>

The school will **not** be open for children to attend on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April and Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2017 as these are Staff Training days.**

The School will also be closed for the May Day Bank Holiday on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017.**

## Children's Centre



### Half Term Activities

#### Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 10am-12pm

**Rise and Shine Play and Learn Session for children under 7 years old.**

Lots of fun, stimulating activities for children and families inside and outside.

**Parents Forum 11.30am-12pm** – Please join in and share your views about the Children's Centre – we want to know if the Children's Centre has helped you and your family and if you feel there is anything we can do to improve.

#### Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 10am-11:30am

**Messy Play at Balham Library for children under 6 years old.**

This is a really popular session and can get very busy so please arrive early to avoid disappointment.

### If you need help and advice about

- Parenting;
- Managing your child's behaviour;
- Child development

**Please speak to the Children's Centre team with any questions and we can work out what to do together.**

**And finally...**

***NEW FEATURE!!!***

***Any suggestions for future topics please let us know.***



## **AND SO TO BED...**

**A Rough Guide to a Good Night's Sleep**  
**By Dr Ioanna Bakapoulou**  
**(Educational Psychologist)**

How many hours of sleep does a three-year-old need? Does the time at which a child sleeps matter? What hormones are produced during sleep? If, as a parent, you don't know the answers to these questions, you are not alone.

Recent research has shown that an increasing number of children spend their formative years "chronically sleep-deprived". As a result they are not only tired, ratty and inattentive but are more prone to a number of health and physical problems including obesity.

Loss of sleep has a dramatic effect on children's ability to concentrate and learn at school, their behaviour and physical development. There are many causes for this such as over-scheduling of activities, television sets and video games in the bedroom all contribute. So does guilt; home from work after dark, as parents we want time with the children and are reluctant to order them to bed.

Children's brains are a work in progress until the age of 21 and much of that work is done while a child is asleep. There is now a wide range of research evidence showing that lost

sleep hours appear to have an exponential impact on children that it simply doesn't have on adults. This is because children's sleep is qualitatively different to grown-ups' sleep. Compared to adults, much more of the time children are asleep is spent restructuring and rewiring the brain and if they miss that there is no way they can catch up.

**Remember that when it comes to a developing child, sleep is as important as all their other biological needs!**

### **Top Tips for Getting Children to Sleep**

**Have a set sleep time:** Set a regular sleep-wake schedule with no more than one hour deviation from day to day, including weekends.

**Check out the bedroom:** Check the temperature of the room as too much heat disturbs sleep. Constant noise can have the same effect, as can too much light.

**Relaxation time:** Get your child to do something relaxing in the half hour before bed — reading or listening to an audio book.

**Remove distractions:** Make bedtime mean sleep time. This may mean removing toys, TV and computer from the bedroom. No eating, drinking or talking.

**Enforce boundaries:** When you say two stories, mean two stories. Lack of limits can lead to long bedtime battles.

**Focus the routine:** Aim to do the same things each night, about 30 minutes before bed — for example: a quick bath; straight into the bedroom; dim lights; read stories; say goodnight and leave.

**Diet:** Avoid fizzy drinks close to bedtime. For a snack, try a banana, warm milk, an oat biscuit or wholegrain cereal.

**Regular exercise:** Encourage exercise for 20-30 minutes three or four times a week (but not within three hours of bedtime).

**Praise:** Praise your child if they keep to "the rules".

## SPRING 1 PLANNING

This half term we have welcomed a few new children into the nursery. We use their emerging interests as a starting point in our planning. We continue to support all children to feel safe, settled and have a sense of belonging at BNSCC; for many of the children who have been with us for longer we are encouraging them to move around the nursery more independently and begin to play with a wider group of peers.

**Personal, social and emotional development** continues to be one of the biggest areas of learning for many children across the year. Having new and younger children joining us at this point in the year provides a valuable, real-life opportunity for those who are well established here to take the lead and support others in finding their way around the nursery and in becoming familiar with the routines and expectations. It is also a good point for them to reflect upon what they have learnt over their time at Balham Nursery and as they have grown older, as well as developing empathy for others and understanding that we all have different experiences, understanding and things that we are learning. As well as continuing to support the children in developing their interactions with others and their role within a group we encourage them as individuals to find their own voices; for some this may be using their physical voice, for others their Memory Book may play a particularly important role or their play with particular resources whether it is the blocks or sand. Developing their skills in negotiating conflict and beginning to compromise or find ways to take turns with one another is ongoing for children in their time with us, with the youngest children typically at a much earlier stage in their understanding and the ability of children to independently manage conflict increasing as they have more experience and learn strategies to draw on.

**Physical development** is important all year round and at this time of year a particular area to support is children's increasing independence in putting on and taking off their coats, changing between shoes and wellies as well as changing their clothes if necessary, either due to getting wet exploring the weather or not quite making it to the toilet in time! The changes in weather, from heavy frosts to warmer and wetter days, gives plenty of opportunity to support children to begin to recognise their own needs and self-regulate, thinking about whether they are hot or cold and what clothing they need to play in the garden. In the garden we continue to make use of the climbing frame and trees for climbing and developing their gross motor skills and many children are becoming increasingly competent on obstacle courses, whether climbing the cat ladder or balancing along a plank. The popularity in mark-making across the nursery continues with children's control over the marks they are making increasing, whether it is a rocket's engine being drawn onto the climbing frame or a sign being made reminding people to close the door to the garden. We continue to support children at their level and through their interests to engage in a wide range of mark-making to develop their confidence and skill. Their fine motor skills also continue to be developed through a range of provision including construction sets such as mobilo, which requires quite a lot of finger strength to connect and pull apart pieces, using tools at the woodwork bench and workshop area including saws, hammers and scissors as well as a running interest in threading, whether using beads and pipe cleaners or string and cheerios.

**Communication and language development** is supported by all that we do at nursery and we have a wide range of children at different levels of language development and learning English. If you would like to come in and read a story in your home language or are prepared to record a story for us please speak to your child's key person; we have a number of dual language books at the nursery or you may bring in books from home. For some children it is a case of supporting them to begin to use their voices with confidence and to make their wants and needs known and for others it is beginning to understand why we listen to others and developing the ability to listen and then respond appropriately. Whatever the age and stage of development for an individual they are continually having new vocabulary modelled to them, whether through an adult joining imaginative play, sharing of non-fiction books and stories or engaging in a focus activity trying to make a light bulb turn on! Storytelling has taken off in a big way with some children dictating their own stories and many contributing their ideas to write a group story. Nursery rhymes are an important part of children's development with some children learning a broader repertoire and others beginning to adapt and change them, playing with rhyme and alliteration for their own and others' amusement.

### Ways you can support your child

- Particularly for new children, there are a lot of children and adults in the nursery to get to know; you can use peg photos and the interactive display in the covered way to support your child in getting to know other children's names and the photos of staff at their classroom.
- Sharing books and rhymes in your own language is hugely important for children's development; each class has a selection of books that you can borrow from so ask for further information if you are interested. If your child is showing interest in letters and sounds then speak to your key person or class teacher to find out the best ways of supporting this interest outside of nursery.
- Children are increasingly willing to try new activities; support them to take on challenges by talking about how you and they get better at things through effort and practice and what we can all learn when things go wrong.
- Many children have been fascinated by the heavy frosts and commenting on the changes in the natural world around them across the winter. Support them to make links between their experiences and if they are asking questions encourage them to suggest their own ideas before finding out the answers together

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are about *how* children learn rather than *what* they learn. They underpin all areas of the curriculum and support children to become life-long learners. You can support your child by being specific when you praise them, especially noting effort such as how they concentrated, tried different approaches, persisted, solved problems or had new ideas. Modelling the language of thinking and learning yourself using language such as *think, know, remember, forget, idea, makes sense, plan, learn, find out, confused, figure out, trying to do* and showing that you don't always know the answer, are curious and sometimes puzzled encourages children to have their own ideas and make links between their experiences. You can encourage open-ended thinking by not settling on the first ideas, perhaps asking *what else is possible?*

### Donations

If you have any spare clothes that you could donate to the nursery- particularly pants, socks and trousers- we would be very grateful as our stock of spare clothes for children to change into is very low!



If you have any old portable CD players, cameras or torches- either working or not- we would love them. If they're working we can use them and if they're not we can take them apart with the children to fuel their investigative skills and interest in how things work.

