



February Newsletter 2014

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to our February newsletter bringing you up to date with everything that has been happening at Toy Box over the last month. The children seemed to have settled back in to the routine of nursery life after the Christmas break and are full of enthusiasm and as usual ready to get down to the serious business of play!

Baby Unit

In the Pooh bear room this month the babies have been finding out all about textures. Staff provided a selection of materials to encourage the children to explore and use all their senses. One activity they all particularly enjoyed was playing with porridge! Photographs of this activity can be seen in a display in the Pooh Bear room.

The Rabbits have also been using their senses as they too spent much time exploring various materials including fabric and gloop to discover how all the different textures felt. They all had lots of fun as they enthusiastically tried to repeat lots of descriptive words introduced by staff to further develop their emerging language skills.

They have also been playing with sand, filling and emptying containers using spades and other equipment. Again staff used this opportunity to introduce new words combined with simple mathematical concepts such as empty and full.

Early Years

In the Piglet room this month the children have been exploring wild animals. The activity was extended further with the introduction of a new song where the children were encouraged to make animal noises and move around the room like the animals they were imitating.

Staff then capitalised on the children's interest and extended the activity further by encouraging the children to put the animals into water, sand and the mud tray in the play ground to see how the animals would move in each of the different areas. The children's imagination knew no bounds and they all thoroughly enjoyed the activity.

To finish of the activity the children created pictures of wild animals which are now proudly displayed on the display board for all to admire.

Throughout January in the Tigger's room the children have been talking about themselves and their families. They drew pictures of themselves and each member of their family, describing everyone in great detail and in many cases included the family pet.

The staff then extended this to talk about what we look like, our hair colour, eye colour, hand size and feet size. The children had great fun carrying out hand and foot prints and drawing self portraits using a mirror.

This activity generated lots of discussions about the differences and similarities between us and our families and also between one another. The main message being that we are all different but that is good!

Changes!

At the beginning of January a number of staff attended some very interesting training in order to update their childcare knowledge and skills. This training proved to be both informative and thought provoking and as a result the staff members who attended have come back buzzing with new ideas as to how we can further enrich our nursery environment. Led by Kerry and Kirstie staff were encouraged to rethink the nursery environment in general and how the children access all the areas on a daily basis.

As a result staff have begun to move bits of equipment around and experiment with where different resources are placed. They have come up with an action plan which amongst a host of other changes includes changing the colour scheme to calm soothing colours throughout the nursery.

You may have noticed some small changes already with staff swapping the book area and the home corner. All of this will be complimented with the introduction of new equipment and resources which will impact on how we care for and teach your child/ children on a daily basis.

Of course all of these changes won't happen overnight. This is going to be a long term project which will slowly see the nursery and its environment evolve into an even more learning and accessible experience for all the children.

Once the project is well underway we aim to hold an information evening for parents/carers where we will share with you the ideas and thoughts behind the changes we will be making so that you understand what it is we are trying to achieve.

This is all very exciting for both staff and children alike as together we try out these new approaches and ideas. As parents/ carers we would very much welcome any input or thoughts you may have on the changes that we are proposing and have already been made.

Birthdays

We have eight birthdays this month here at Toy Box and I'm sure you will join with us as we wish them all a very Happy Birthday.

Pooh Bears – Imogen 1, Miley 1.
Rabbits – Lainee 2.
Piglets – Georgia 3, Milaad 3, Jasmine 3
Tiggers – Oliver 4, Krenar 4.

Requests

One of the new ideas which we are trying to implement into our daily routines in nursery is the use of recognisable items that have meaning to the children. These items will be used by staff and children in a variety of ways as the children play and explore. Once we have

collected all the items together we will expand further on the reasoning behind this but for now donations of the following items will be greatly received:

- Plastic bottle tops (milk carton tops, pop bottle tops etc)
- Corks
- Gloves (odd or pairs, adults/ children)
- Purses
- Ribbon (any lengths)
- Material (shiny, colourful, interesting, textured)
- Washing tablet boxes (square/oblong which can be stacked like bricks)

A big thank you in anticipation of your kind donations.

Staff member of the month

This month the award goes to Georgia who works in the Piglet room. Parent/ carers state that Georgia is always cheerful, even early in the morning and is always welcoming to every child who comes in to the nursery, not just the Piglets whom she works with.

Well done Georgia!

Please continue to nominate staff for this award as it means so much to them to know that their efforts are appreciated.

February Menu

Sue has planned a lovely menu for February which is attached to this newsletter. Any feedback on the menu and ideas for any future menus are always welcome.

Dates for your diary

Friday 21st February – First day of half term for Grant only children.
Monday 3rd March – First day back after half term for Grant only children.

And finally

Thank you for your continued support. As ever please remember that all your comments, concerns and suggestions are welcome, taken seriously and acted upon if necessary.

Joanne and all the Staff at Toy Box