

Newsletter June 2009

Term and Holiday Dates

Term 6	Monday 1 June – Thursday 16 July 2009
Term 1	Thursday 3 September – Thursday 22nd October 2009

Dates for your Diary

Open Day/Parents Day	Saturday 20 June 2009, 10am - 12
Cake Bake Sale	Saturday 20 June 2009 from 9am
Beale Park Outing	Friday 3 July 2009
Leaver's Party	Friday 17 July 2009 11am till 1pm (not normal session – Only for those children leaving for big school)

In This Issue: New Chair and committee members needed, Open Day, Fundraising Update, Leaver's Party

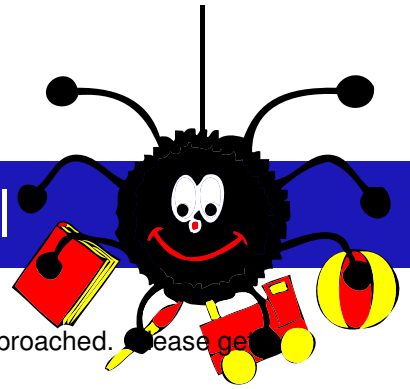
Jane Bennetto writes: Hello everyone. We hope you all had a fantastic half term break and the children have returned with recharged batteries. It was fantastic to get some sunshine and warmth, and let's hope it continues. (I am actually writing this as the rain pours down, but I am hopeful the sunshine will return by the time you read this!)

New Chair Needed Now – Pre-school at risk of closure

Our quest to find a new Chair continues....will you step forward?? My family is moving back to Australia in November, so I cannot continue in the role. I will remain as a committee member until the end of Term 1, and we have a number of highly experienced members to help out. I have thoroughly enjoyed the time that I've been in role (as a complete novice!), and recommend it highly to have input to your child's early education, meet other parents and get to know how pre-school operates.

If no one steps forward by the end of June, the process for closing pre-school will start and you will need to consider alternative child care arrangements. This is serious – no pre-school, and staff could lose their jobs!! I recognise that we all lead busy lives and have other commitments, but we are all in a similar position. We are a community based volunteer organisation, which only can only exist with a volunteer committee. We currently have many members who have been on the committee for over two years, and it is only fair that we share the load, and more importantly, get an injection of new ideas. We hope you will be happy to give some time back, as we have done. Unfortunately, due to our tight financial situation, we are unable to offer second home mortgage relief or duck pond maintenance! Please call me on 838991 or Ali Wood on 824398 if you would like to discuss taking on the role or joining the committee. Committee

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members are also asking people to come forward, so you may have already been approached. Please get involved as we also need new members!

Outdoor Play Area

We hope to have our new and exciting outdoor play area ready for the start of the September term. Plans have been drafted and these will be available on the noticeboard soon. The sub-committee are in the process of tendering the ground work preparation and fencing. When you see the plans, you can see how much a difference it will make to the children. We will be able to have the side doors open for children to move freely in and out of the secure play area, which Ofsted strongly support. We will have a fabulous pergola to use as an outdoor classroom and play/snack area. There will be a gardening area and a number of activities that encourage children's development and creative play. This has been funded through the Oxfordshire County Council and all of us through supporting fundraising. The children will love it!

Fundraising Update

Treasure Hunt ends 29 June

You should have received your Treasure Hunt letter and map, and can hope you will support this fun fundraising event, while helping the little explorer develop in your child. This is our main fundraising event for the summer period, as we have had to postpone the Summer Family BBQ that was originally planned for 28 June. We are hoping to organise a fun event in the spring when we might hopefully have better weather.

Cake Sale 20 June

We will also be holding another Cake Sale on the same morning 20 June - just in time for Father's Day, at Bob's Corner in the village centre. Money raised will help pay for gardening equipment for the children to use in the outside area and for computer programmes for the children to use. We would really appreciate it if you could bring cakes in to pre-school for us to sell on Thursday 18th or Friday 19th June or directly to the stall on Saturday 20th June. Please let us know if you would be available to help sell cakes on the stall too.

Summer Playscheme

This popular event is continuing over the summer holidays on Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am till noon from 28 July to 27 August. A fabulous range of activities have been planned, including craft, music, sport and dance. Healthy snacks and homemade cakes will be available for sale. You will receive a booking form shortly so please ask at pre-school if you haven't received one. They are also available from Benson Library. For further information, please contact Alice on 834510 or Val on 838361.

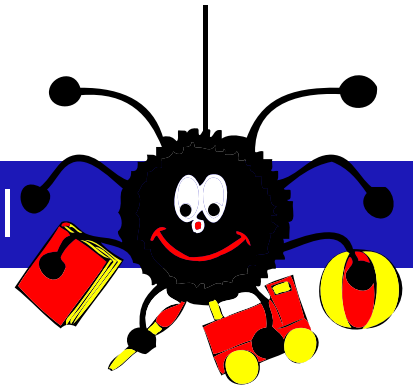
Early Years Capital Grant

We have received advice from Oxford County Council that our project to rebuild the Youth Hall is currently awaiting the outcome of a report on the building condition. Finance and Legal offices of the council are also assessing if our needs may be better met with alternative arrangements. So we are still keeping our fingers crossed for a positive outcome.

Belated Thank You

I will be the first to admit that my memory is not great. So it is with regret that in our last newsletter's report on the AGM, that I forgot to thank the Treasurer, Vicki Jarvis, and the Finance Committee for all their hard work and dedication over the last year. Vicki does a brilliant job managing the finances and carries out a vast number of other jobs to help keep pre-school operating. So a huge thank you to Vicki and her team.

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Cass Prior writes:

Topics

We will soon be finishing our topic on 'Holidays and Other Countries'. During this topic we enjoyed doing lots of art and crafts including making flags from lots of different countries, talking about all of the places that we have been on holiday and learning some basic words from other languages!

Our next topic is 'Summer', and we have lots of fun activities planned, many of which we can hopefully carry out in the garden!

If you have any ideas of any activities that you would like to share with the Pre-School, please speak to myself or Sara and we can arrange a time for you to come and share your stories/ ideas with the children!

Phonics

We have now separated the children into groups of older and younger children to carry out our Phonics programme. We are spending a lot of time in the Rainbow room working on Phonics games and even learning about areas such as Alliteration through fun phonics games!

We have also been using the garden to carry out lots of phonics game and working on listening skills with the younger children, it is wonderful to see the children getting involved with the games and working together on problem-solving.

School Visits

I recently met with Mrs Johnson, the current Early Years Co-ordinator at Benson Pre-School during Mrs. Tanner's maternity leave. We have arranged for the children to visit the primary school during normal Pre-School sessions in small groups of 4 with a member of staff in July. During this visit, the children will have the opportunity to meet all of the teachers and see their new classrooms! A letter with details and a permission slip will follow in the next week.

All of the children have also received a letter inviting them to visit the School in July. Mrs. Johnson has asked me to request that parents take their children to these sessions. If your child is due to be in Pre-School on that day, please feel free to bring them in for the beginning of the session and collect them early, or just let us know if they will not be coming at all on the morning of their visit. We can't wait to hear all about your visit!

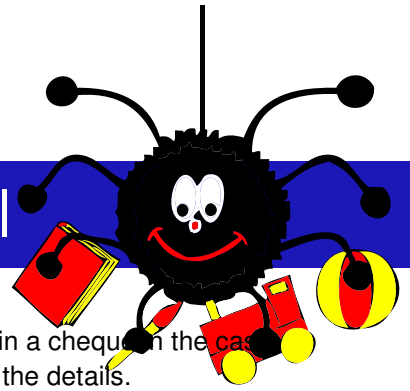
Webster's library

Thank you to all of the parents for working with us to make Webster's lending library such a success! We will soon be starting to wind down the lending for the end of term to make sure that all of the books are returned and we will be carrying out a full inventory of our books! Which lead us onto our plans for this year's book pledge.....

Book Pledge

Last year, many of the parents and children that were leaving to go to school donated a book to the Pre-School that was presented to the Pre-School from the child. This was very successful last year and is a lovely way for us to remember the children after they have gone to school! We have created a wish list with some lovely books that we would like to add to Webster's library. The list will be placed on the noticeboard

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and will include the price. Simply chose a book, write your name against it, then pop in a cheque in the cash box for the amount, and we will arrange the rest. You will shortly receive a letter with the details.

Staff Training

The staff have had an exciting term which we wanted to share with you! We would like to say a big congratulations to Sally Harris who has completed her NVQ Level 3. Sally commenced the NVQ Level 2 qualification last year but was quickly identified as the ideal candidate to be fast-tracked straight onto the level 3 course! Well done to Sally and we are so pleased to have you on the staff team at the Pre-School!

We have also been on lots of training this term, including courses on the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and we also took part in a pilot scheme on stammering.

Drinking bottles

Please could all parents bring in a named drinking bottle for their child for each session. As part of our plans to gain an outstanding Ofsted report, it is important to have drinking water that the children can access themselves and to encourage the children to recognise when they are thirsty.

Sun Hats

We are hoping for some more lovely sunny days before the end of term, so please don't forget to continue bringing in sun hats and sun cream so that we can enjoy as much time as possible outside!

Questionnaires

Over the coming week, we will be handing out a parent questionnaire. As you know, we have made lots of changes over the past 6 months to try and make the Pre-School the best that it can be! It means so much to myself and the staff to receive positive comments and ideas for further improvements from parents and it would be greatly appreciated if you could return the questionnaires to the cash tin. Thank you!

Parents' Open Day

Please remember that we will be holding a Parent's open day on Saturday 20th June from 10-12pm at the Pre-School. All of the staff have an appointment sheet and will be asking you to arrange an appointment with them on this day or on a day that is convenient to you. During this appointment you will have the chance to see our new progress records, and chat to your key-worker about your child's progress at home and in the Pre-School.

On this morning, we will also be opening the Pre-School to any prospective parents and so if you know of any families that may be interested in coming to the Pre-School, please let them know about our open morning or feel free to bring them along with you!

Praise Book

We have received some more lovely comments in our praise book, so please take the time to have a look at the feedback from other parents and possibly add some of you own!

Leavers Party

Once again this year, we will be holding a leaver's party for the children who are going to school in September. The party will be held at pre-school on Friday 17th July from 11am till 1pm. We are currently

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planning our theme and lots of games to play and we will let you know about these soon. We are very excited about this party and look forward to a lovely day with the children who are going to 'big school'!

Beale Park Outing Reminder

We will be visiting Beale Park on Friday 3rd July. We will be meeting at the corner of St Helen's Ave at 9am, with the coach departing at 9.15. Please could you return your forms as soon as possible so that we can confirm numbers for the coach and entry to the park. We will be arranging a time on the day to meet for lunch and if you are able to come with your children on the day, any help is greatly appreciated and it will be a fantastic day out!

It has been another progressive and fantastic term and once again we have had such wonderful support from all of the parents. As this will be the last newsletter for some of our parents whose children will be going to school, I would like to say a special thank you to all of you for your fantastic support! It has been an absolute pleasure working with you and all of your children and we will all miss you so much! Please don't forget to pop in and see us from time to time! We would love to see the children looking all grown up in their school uniforms!

Jane Bennetto & Cass Prior