

Newsletter October 2009

Term & Holiday Dates

Term 1:	Thursday 3 September – Thursday 22nd October 2009
Term 2:	Monday 2nd November – Friday 18th December 2009
Term 3:	Wednesday 6th January – Friday 12th February 2010 NB 4 th and 5 th January are inset days at Benson Primary so we won't be open
Term 4:	Monday 22 nd February – Monday 1 st April 2010
Term 5:	Monday 19 th April – Friday 28 th May 2010
Holidays:	Monday 3rd and Monday 31 st May 2010
Term 6:	Monday 7 th June – Wednesday 21 st July 2010

Dates for your Diary

Individual Photos:	Tues 13 th October
Pamper Evening:	Fri 16th October, Parish Hall
Parents night out:	Tues 3rd November, 3 Horseshoes, 8pm
Next Committee Meeting:	Tues 10th November, 7:45, venue tbc

In This Issue: *New Committee Members Required, New Pre-school Garden, Salsa Evening, Reminders and Updates, Cass' New Role*

Ali Wood (Vice-Chair):

So I am back writing to you again but not in the Chair position this time... As I am sure you know, Jane Bennetto has stepped down as Chair to allow herself time to organise her family's move back to Australia towards the end of this year. I would like to thank Jane for all her work as Chair. She truly is a wonderful person to have stepped up temporarily in April this Year given her plans to move home. She really got her teeth stuck into the role, has been great to work with and I will miss her loads! Good luck Jane.

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Also worthy of a great big thank you is Vicki Jarvis. After nearly 3 years on the committee, Vicki has decided to step down as Treasurer. Over the years Vicki has been the back bone of our Pre-school and a huge support to me personally in my endeavours to improve our Pre-school. Thank you Vicki, and great that you will be staying on the committee to help out, your experience and level headed approach are really needed at the moment. Thank you to Kim Harris for offering to pick up the Treasurer's reins, I know you will do a brilliant job.

I also have to notify you of Liz Copping's plans to step down as Co-treasurer at the end of term 2. Liz's role is essential to the running of our Pre-school as she is the woman behind the invoices you receive and does all our banking. Again in advance of your resignation Liz, thank you for all your hard work!

So I am afraid to say, once again we are in dire need of new volunteers (even if it is just until July 2010):

- Our Committee is Chairless. No one came forward at the EGM on 30th September. I have notified Ofsted that this is the case and unfortunately we can probably only function for a term or 2 without a Chair before Ofsted will intervene and make life difficult for us. This would be a great pity given the wonderful work that our staff do on a day to day basis with your children. We urgently need someone to come forward and take on the Chair position!
- We also urgently need someone to come forward and offer to do the invoicing and banking so that Liz can do a hand over before Christmas. Without someone in this role, you might get free childcare for a week or 2 but our Pre-school will quickly go bankrupt!
- We urgently need parents with children in the 2 – 3 age group or toddlers not yet at Pre-school to come forward and get involved in the committee **NOW**. At the next AGM in April 2010, there will only be one current committee member left in post as the rest of us will be stepping down as our children will be starting school September 2010. Please come forward now to learn about what is involved when there is a group of experienced parents in post. Don't leave it until April, it will be so much harder!

On a happier note, you may have noticed that we are starting to make a bit of progress with the outside area. For those parents that are new to Pre-school, we received a small Capital Grant of £5,000 earlier this year from Oxfordshire County Council to develop an enclosed outdoor area. Pre-school is also contributing a further £3,000 from fundraising money to the project. The committee has now instructed someone to prepare the ground, lift the slabs, turf the area and erect the fence. We have an Outdoor Area Advisor from OCC visiting us next week to discuss our plans. The ground prep will hopefully be completed by the end of October after which time we can get to work on creating a beautiful garden and play area! Again, all of this work will be done by parent volunteers so please let me know if you are interested in lending a hand. The more help we get, the sooner the area will be ready for enjoyment by your child. My e-mail is alison@woodclan.org.uk, tel 824398 if you want to help.

Unfortunately, the Large Capital Grant to rebuild the Youth Hall seems to be slipping from our grasp. As you probably know from previous newsletters, we didn't make it on to the short list of

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approved projects as OCC were not prepared to hand all the cash over to the Parish Council for the general benefit of the wider community. We were however entered into a consultation phase with OCC and Benson Primary to assess the possibility of moving the Pre-school onto the school site. Unfortunately as those of us with children at the school will know, there is little space within the school building to accommodate us and no obvious site to build on within the school grounds. I have until October 16th to come up with a plan B but I fear there may not be one. Again, if anyone has a brain wave on how we could spend £250,000, keep everyone happy (Parish Council, School, Trustees of School, Pre-school) and cut through lots of red tape then please let me know!

Val Ward (Fundraising) writes:

The Fundraising Team have been very busy this term organising a string of events. Obviously the main focus is on the Pamper Evening on Friday 16th October and we hope to see ALL of you there! This is the second one we have organised and it was a huge success last year both in terms of money raised for pre-school and fantastic comments on the night about how much fun it was. We are still looking for helpers on the night so if you can spare some time in between your appointments and haven't let us know, please do so as soon as you can so we can finalise the rota.

We are planning to produce a lovely item, made by your children, which will make a perfect Christmas present for Grandma... all will be revealed in Term 2!

Finally, we have a Salsa Night planned for Saturday 6th February. We thought a bit of dancing and some spicy nibbles, not to mention some warming Sangria, would be just the thing for the end of winter. We will be issuing more details and looking for volunteers nearer the time but please put the date in your diary – we welcome all standards from John Sergeant and Tom Chambers and please note, the emphasis is on FUN!

Lisa Well's Writes:

Welcome back I hope you all had a lovely summer!!...Firstly I would like to welcome our new children this term Emily Lindley, Lily Knibbs, Kate Officer, Max Bradbury, Katie Garwood, Josh Livesey and Emily Rees. I hope you all have a wonderful time at Benson Pre-school and I am looking forward to getting to know you all over the next few weeks.

Topics for this term

Colours- 3rd September - 25th September.

All About Me- 27th September- 23rd October.

During our colours topic children will explore a variety of colours through colour mixing activities. We will be collecting gold items and talking about golden rules, we will be also looking at colour all around us for example traffic lights, Autumn colours the colour of animals and colours for camouflage.

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During our All about me topic children will be talking about home and community, making all about me books, discussing emotions, drawing pictures of favourite things the children like to do when at pre-school. Children will also be drawing pictures of themselves and if children could bring in a photo of their family to share with us that would be greatly appreciated.

During this term we will be having a visit from Reverend Andrew Hawken to sing some songs and talk about harvest festival.

Training As always staff are continually updating or attending new training throughout the year, this term Sara Ogden has started her (EYPS) Early Years Professional Status, well done Sara! Other training attended this term by our staff team will be Phonics, First Aid and Child Protection.

Active Kids Voucher's A big thank you for all the voucher's that were collected we have now received a lovely colourful tunnel, pop up goal, small forks and trowls.

Letter of the Week At the beginning of each term you will receive a letter listing each letter of the week we will be covering in support of our phonics teaching. Please help your child with this learning by bringing in items that begin with the letter of the week to go on Webster's table for discussion during circle time. The letter of the week is also displayed on the notice board.

Book of the Week Each week a topic-related story book is chosen which we will focus on for the week by ensuring all of the children have the opportunity to share the same story and take part in activities relating to the story. The children are really enjoying this and look forward to hearing the story at the end of the session, and often join in as they know the lines off by heart!

Webster's Library All of the children have been given a clear named plastic book bag. During the session they choose a book with a member of staff to take home and share with a parents / grand parents / brothers / sisters etc. We look forward to hearing all about their story!

Webster Our very own friendly Pre-school spider, Webster, along with his blanket and book will be taking his turn at visiting your homes. Please encourage your child to draw us a picture and if possible write a few sentences in the book to let us know what he's been doing with your child. We will then share it during group time.

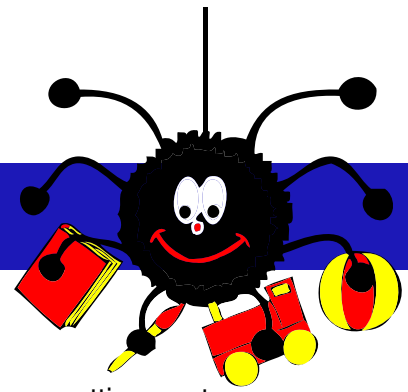
Individual Photos The photographer will be coming to pre-school on Tuesday morning, October 13th. Children who already attend Tuesday morning will have their photo taken during the session. For those who do not usually attend Tuesday morning and you would like their photo taken please bring them in at 9.15am but please note that you will need to stay while the children have their photos taken.

Reminders

For new parents and as a reminder to everyone else, here are some things to remember to bring to each session:

- A piece of fruit for our snack fruit bowl
- A toy for show and tell circle time
- An item related to our letter of the week or topic covered

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- Packed lunch if your child is staying for lunch club
- Coats now the weather is cooler. Please remember to label them as putting coats on before going out can become quite challenging!

If there is anything that we can help you with please speak to a member of the staff team who will be happy to help. I hope you have a happy and fun term!!

Cass Prior writes:

Firstly, I would like to welcome you all back for our autumn term 2009! I'm sure you will agree that Summer had been and gone before we knew it! As you all know, I have very gratefully taken on the new position of Pre-School Director and I am absolutely thrilled to have the chance to continue working with all of the children, staff and committee in the Pre-School.

In this new role, I will be at the Pre-School for the same sessions as last term, however, for the morning sessions, I will be focusing on the administration and Ofsted aspects of the Pre-School in order to continue striving towards our goal of achieving an outstanding Ofsted report. I am always around during the sessions, so please feel free to have a chat if you have any questions or comments!

I am working very closely with Lisa, Sara and the committee and we are continuing to work together to bring positive changes to the Pre-School so that each and every child is able to learn, play and enjoy their time at the Pre-School!

Also, you may have noticed that Val and Mia have been absent from the Pre-School recently. Both are recovering well from operations and we look forward to seeing them back at the Pre-School soon and wish them a speedy recovery!

Finally, a big welcome back to Lisa, and a huge thank you to Vicki, Liz and Jane for all of their hard work on the committee. Also, not forgetting a massive thank you to Ali for her continued hard work and dedication to the Pre-School and committee!

I look forward to sharing a fun and progressive term with you all and thank you to all of the parents for their support. I look forward to working with some of you on the parent committee in the near future!

Alison Wood

Cass Prior

Vice Chair

Director