



Word from Windmill

January 2016

Happy New Year! Welcome to all our new parents, carers and children. We hope you enjoy your time at Windmill Pre-School and the children settle in quickly. To those familiar faces returning after the holidays, we hope you all had a great festive break and are ready for this new term. We've got lots of great activities planned for the children in the weeks running up to February Half Term plus a couple of fundraising opportunities for you to get involved with. We hope you enjoy this Half Term with us and look forward to having your support.

Thank you

The Staff would like to thank you all for their lovely gifts and cards at the end of last term. We all really appreciate your support and generosity.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for coming along to our Christmas Nativity, buying raffle tickets and donating generously for refreshments. We raised around £240 on the day and are just collating the figures from the Santa letters, the Christmas cards and the nativity and Santa photos. If you ordered photos, they should be with you in the next week or so. Please can we ask that all costumes borrowed for the performance are returned so they can be cleaned if necessary and put away for the next festive performance.

OFSTED

As most of you are probably aware we had our OFSTED inspection last Wednesday. Thank you to all the parents/carers who took their time to speak to the inspector and the kind words you have passed on to Kate and the team since. We will have the results in 2 – 4 weeks, so as soon as our rating and report is published we will let you know.

Dates for the diary and fundraising

Letters have already been sent out this week detailing our next *Quiz Night* which is being held on Friday 5th February at The Hub in Ivinghoe. This is always a great night with lots of laughs, lovely food and brain teasing trivia. We hope that you will join us either by getting a team together or joining us as an individual to join a team.

We have some additional dates for you to note in your diaries for the remaining months of this academic year:

- Friday 4th March and Thursday 7th July – Textile Recycling
- Wednesday 27th April – Annual Sponsored Walk around the village
- Saturday 14th May – Family photo session with Photography by Carrie
- Wednesday 20th July – Sports Day and Leavers ceremony

More details about events will be released nearer the time. Your support with all of these events is much appreciated.

As always, you can help us raise funds for *free* when you shop online with *Easyfundraising*. It is a great way to raise money for Windmill Pre-School and doesn't cost you a penny! Shop online from over 2,700 retailers using the website www.easyfundraising.org.uk and they'll give a donation to us every time you buy something at no extra cost to you or the pre-school. With Christmas fast approaching and inevitably lots of things to buy, you really could help make a difference.

Outside play areas



As you know, following an agreement made last year with Miss Douglas, Head at Brookmead School, we are able to make use of their playing fields every morning between 9.15am and 10.15am – weather permitting. The weather is very wet and muddy at the moment so please make sure that you provide a suitable named coat and outdoor footwear for your child to enjoy the elements.

Home learning board

We will be introducing a home learning board - we have ordered 10 bags with a range of activities that can be done at home to help develop a range of skills from finger muscles for early writing, fine motor skill develop and puppets for communication and language. The bags can be signed out, taken home then returned and placed on the hooks ready for the next child/parent. In the bags will be examples of activities you can do, the areas they help to develop and how to do the activities.

Staff signing in

Staff now sign in with a named picture close to the area where the children collect their name labels. This is so children know who is in on that day and so that parents and children can familiarise themselves with our staff members and their names. It also helps parents to know if their child's key worker is on a particular day or whether it's their 'buddie' instead.

Lost property

As you can imagine, as the year progresses, we gain quite a collection of non-labelled clothing, lunch box containers, drinks bottles, coats and shoes that have been left behind. To avoid this, please can we remind you to label all items that your child brings in to the setting. This can be done either with a permanent fabric marker or by using iron on or stick on labels. We recommend labels from Mynametags which are very reliable and cost effective and for each pack purchased, if you quote [School ID 50327](#) we will receive £1. We currently have a number of identical bags and coats, so to avoid confusion, please ensure that they are named and any spare clothes are in a clearly named bag.

Parent partnership

Do you have an interesting job? Do you wear a well-known uniform to work? Or maybe you have an interesting hobby? We would love to hear from anyone that could come in and talk to the children about their job or hobby.

Last term we were very pleased to have been visited by a local dentist who came in and talked to the children about the role of a dentist and how to keep teeth clean and healthy. We also had Tuli, a parent who came in to talk to us about Diwali, Festival of Lights which is celebrated all around the world by millions of Hindus, Sikhs and Jains each Autumn. The children thoroughly enjoyed both sessions and we look forward to more like these.

Could any parents spare a couple of hours to come and help out at Pre-School – either on a regular basis or just as a one off? Would you like to come and help out with some baking, messy play or gardening? Or maybe do some singing or reading with the children? We would love to hear from dads as well, so please do get in touch and speak to Kate.

Sickness

Please be reminded that our policy on sickness is that all children are to remain at home for 48 hours after being sick, showing signs of diarrhoea or starting a dose of antibiotics. Also, any medicines or antibiotics that need to be administered during Pre-School hours by Windmill staff must be in the original packaging with the original pharmacist label attached along with the date of issue and dosage. We would like to remind parents and carers that you need to inform staff before the start of a session if your child is unable to attend. This is especially important for funded children as regular unreported absences could result in the withdrawal of a child's funding. The landline number is 661031.

**Website and Facebook**

Our website www.windmillpreschool.co.uk is a great source of interesting information, dates for your diary and fundraising events. We also have a 'private' Facebook group which is open to all parents and guardians with children currently attending Windmill. You can find us at: www.facebook.com/groups/windmillpreschoolpitstone. We share useful information, post Pre-School related news, events and competitions. Feel free to join us. You can also click on 'Find us on Facebook' which is located on our website to request to join our group.

Thank you for your support.

The Team

Windmill Pre-School