



## Word from Windmill

February 2016

Welcome to the fourth edition of *Word from Windmill*. We hope you all had a relaxing break. The year is really flying by - we are now half way through this academic year. I was pleased to announce at the end of last half term that following our OFSTED inspection on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016 we have been awarded a Good rating. We are delighted with the report and its contents and are looking forward to continuing to improve your child's experience with us. We hope you enjoy this very short Half Term - we've got lots of fun and creativity planned for the children to enjoy and a number of small fundraisers organised so we look forward to having your support. Our last day of term will be Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March and we will return on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> April.

### Dates for the diary and fundraising

Between now and the end of the year, there will be a few little fundraisers. Fundraising is an important role for the Voluntary Management Committee as it allows us to invest in additional new equipment and fund some fun sessions run by outside organisations that other settings may otherwise have to ask parents to pay for – such as sports and dance sessions. We hope that parents and carers will continue to support us throughout the year....

On Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> March we will be having another Textile Recycling session which is a great opportunity to have a big clear out of clothes, bags and shoes that are then weighed and turned in to cash for Pre-School. This week you will receive a letter and a Bag2School collection bag. Spare bags are located in the foyer or just ask Joe and Kate for additional bags. Feel free to get your family and friends involved as every little helps. We will be having another recycling session on Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup>.

Our Annual Sponsored Walk around Pitstone and Ivinghoe will take place on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April and is open to everyone who attends Windmill. We also invite parents, carers and grandparents to come and join in. Letters will be sent out nearer the time.

On Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> May we will be holding a Family Photo Session with Photography by Carrie who is a regular favourite in our pre-school calendar. Photo packages are very competitively priced and make lovely gifts – especially with Father's Day coming up in June. Letter will be sent out with full details of how to reserve your slot.

Another annual event will be our Sports Day and Leavers Graduation which will take place on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> July. We are working out all the details at the moment and information will be made available in due course.

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](http://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.

### Your Pre-School needs you!

Windmill Pre-school is operated by a Voluntary Management Committee, mainly consisting of parents of Windmill pre-schoolers. Members of the elected Committee are the Trustees of the Charity and are responsible for all decision making relating to the running of the Pre-School. Some of the activities we are involved in include strategic management of the setting, supporting Kate with the day to day running of the setting and organising



fundraising activities in order to raise valuable cash to ensure we have enough money to purchase new crafts, toys and equipment throughout the year. We are always looking for help to run these events and activities – from baking or buying cakes to turning up on the day to offer an extra pair of hands. We are grateful for any support you can give us. In the run up to the AGM in May, we will be holding a couple of ‘Coffee Mornings’ where you can pop along and have a chat with members of the Voluntary Management Committee. We hope to see lots of you there and full details will be available shortly.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The Voluntary Management Committee would like to invite you to the AGM on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> May. The meeting will take place in the Meeting Room at Pitstone Memorial Hall at 8pm. Everyone is welcome. There will be a review of the last 12 months and then the current Voluntary Management Committee members will either step down or continue to serve and new members will be elected.

### **Healthy eating**

We promote healthy lunch boxes at Windmill and love to see the children eat a healthy lunch, we like to discuss healthy foods and the food we like to eat, however we are finding that more and more sweets, chocolates and chocolate puddings are being put in lunch boxes. Please can we ask that you save these yummy treats for after Pre-School. Many thanks

### **Toys**

Please can children not bring in any toys from home, we are finding it increasingly difficult to find them at the end of a session, as well as other children wanting to play with them which is causing conflict. We are happy for a child to have a comforter like a muslin or a small teddy in their bag if they may want it to help them settle.

### **Transition group**

We felt that some children were missing out on Transition time if they were off sick for a day, therefore we believe it will be beneficial to do transition sessions twice a week for every child, then if a child is off sick for a day they will still have at least one session a week. We also felt that by repeating it they really understood it better and were able to have some deeper learning in that area for that week.

### **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. Also, 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.



### **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.

### **Website and Facebook**

Our website [www.windmillpreschool.co.uk](http://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](https://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**