



Meppershall Pre-School Newsletter
26th April 2016

Welcome

We would like to give a big welcome to Vinny and Jude and their families who have recently joined us at pre school. We hope they have lots of fun during their time here!

Thank you

Firstly a big thank you for everything you contribute to the pre school..the warm atmosphere, the friendly faces and your help with buying our snack foods and washing our tea towels and dressing up clothes when needed! It really is appreciated.

Thank you to those of you who have already returned your parent questionnaire. We send out questionnaires periodically to gauge where we are doing well and areas we could improve on. The response has been very positive with everyone so far saying their child likes pre school and parents seem happy and many of you are willing to help..thank you! If you have said you would be interested in coming in to participate a session please speak to Tamsin or Andrea to arrange a mutually convenient time, we would love to have you in to spend some time with us! If you think you could share what you do as a job with the children, we would love to have you in to visit too..the children love visitors, and it is great for children to be able to talk about what mum or dad do at work!

We have taken on board comments that could help us improve so far and are thinking of ways in which we could better inform you of what your child has done during each session. If you have any suggestions/ideas on this please write them down and hand them to Tamsin and we will see what we can do!

Pre School Staff

I'm sure most of you are familiar with the Pre school staff team but for those of you who don't see all the staff here they are..roles and responsibilities also detailed in the corridor on the staff board.



**Tamsin – Leader, SENCO
& Key Person**



**Andrea - Deputy
& Key Person**



Louise
Key Person



Julia
Key Person



Em
Key Person



Debbie
Key Person



Sarah
Key Person



Lynda
Relief staff



Yvoone
Relief staff in
training

Tamsin is currently undertaking a qualification to be an accredited Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator so if you have any concerns about your child please don't hesitate to come in for a chat.

We have an open door policy so you can address queries to any member of staff, if it is regarding your child's progress/development please speak to their key person in the first instance.

Topic



Our topic this term is 'Our Favourite Stories' as we have lots of children who love stories and books and would like to introduce some of these to other children who may be less familiar with them. We will have a particular favourite story each week and activities around this, as well as all our usual activities that interest or meet the needs of individual children. So far this term we have read and enjoyed activities related to The Gingerbread Man, The Very Hungry Caterpillar and The Three Little Pigs. We are planning to look at Jack & The Beanstalk next week and will be planting beans, some of which will come home and some we will plant for our 'Mini Diggers' allotment. We will look at different types of beans, shapes, sizes, counting beans and acting out the story with the children. Other books we will include are The Gruffalo, Goldilocks & the 3 Bears, Tiddler and Guess How Much I Love You. If your child has a favourite book please let them bring it in (named clearly) and we can read those too! Our topic is always very 'loose' so if there is something your child really enjoys please make sure we know about it to include in our planning – children learn best when they are motivated by what interests them.



We will be celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday in June with a 'garden party' – more details to follow!

We are making a display of emotions and faces that show emotions – we are also encouraging children to bring in a photograph of something they like that makes them feel really happy – it could be a person, a toy, an experience etc...please bring named photos in as soon as possible..these can also contribute to their progress books.

Transitions to school

We will be saying goodbye to 14 children at the end of this term as they leave us for lower school or elsewhere. We will be very sorry to see them go but have really enjoyed seeing them grow and flourish during their time with us, and look forward to preparing them all for their next big adventure.



To ensure the children are prepared we aim to make the transitions as smooth as possible, and communication is key to this. Tamsin has already been making transition arrangements with Mrs Gunn at Meppershall Academy and transitions for children attending other settings will be organised as soon as possible.

You will receive a separate letter regarding transitions from your child's school but dates will also be at the end of this letter.

Registration



From Monday 6th June, children who are due to leave us for Lower School in July will go into the back room for a short group 'registration' session. This enables us to prepare them for something a little more formal, albeit briefly. Children who are due to go for registration will have a sticker on their usual name card, which will be a reminder for them, you and staff that they need to go to the back room. A member of staff will lead the registration and the children answer as their names are called either by a simple 'yes' or a 'good morning'. It gives us an opportunity to talk to the older children about the days of the week (sometimes in the form of a song) the date, month and what the weather is like. We may also talk about our sound of the week and children can show anything they have brought in for this. It is a good opportunity for the children to talk about anything they may wish to share with the group and children are encouraged to listen to each other and ask and answer questions. We do encourage them to bring in items for 'show and tell' but prefer these to either be related to the sound of the week where possible, or something that is 'special' eg. pictures from a day out, a certificate or medal they may have received or something related to our topic. Please ensure items brought in are clearly named! We also

incorporate some number work such as counting how many days in the week, how many children present etc..and number games.

Sound of the Week



We will be continuing our 'sound of the week'. Each week we focus on a different 'sound' and children are encouraged to bring things from home beginning with that sound and will be able to show their items at group time (please ensure nothing valuable is brought in and that items are named). We don't have as many children showing interest in this at present but would like to keep it going so please try and play games with your child/talk about what 'sound' objects begin with, particularly if they are due to start school soon. I haven't included the link to 'Oxford Owl' in recent letters, but it has some useful tips on helping your child learn phonics and you may find it an interesting read.

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-site/expert-help/phonics-made-easy>

Our sounds for this term are....

Week commencing:	Sound of the Week
25 th April	Gg
3 rd May	Hh
9 th May	li
16 th May	Ff
23 rd May	Bb
30 th May	Bank Holiday & Half Term
6 th June	Ll
13 th June	Ee
20 th June	Rr
27 th June	Ww
4 th July	Kk
11 th July	Xx
18 th July	Vv

'Sammy Sound'

If your child does want to bring something in for the sound of the week, 'Sammy Sound' will look after it in his basket (or next to it if it's too big) so please put items here on the sound of the week table so they don't get mixed up with our resources. Thank you!



Preparing for the sun & whatever the weather!



It is starting to warm up but the weather is still a little unpredictable. Please ensure your child always has a sun hat with them and please send a bottle of sun cream to keep at Pre School, clearly labelled with your child's name. When labelling sun cream please write on a label as even permanent pen does rub off quickly! **Please note that when it is hot or when the weather is expected to be hot, you MUST apply sun cream BEFORE bringing your child in.** We will of course reapply as necessary but it can take us up to 30 minutes to apply sun cream which limits time we can be doing other activities with the children. ***It is your responsibility to let us know if your child does NOT have sun cream on when arriving at Pre School.*** Please also ensure your child has a top / coat as appropriate, sometimes the weather does change quickly so unless you are sure it is going to be very hot all day please send another layer, also the hall can sometimes feel a little chilly! We will try and advise you of whenever you are going to need to bring wellies for the allotment etc..so these are not necessary during summer months, unless weather is wet. They will need them for all allotment trips as when watering and digging they can get very muddy..in fact this is actively encouraged and is great for children's development!



Please clearly name all clothing, bags, wellies and lunchboxes, as well as small tubs and drink bottles they may also have with them at lunchtimes. Remember, fresh drinking water is available for children at all times, so they do not need to bring a drink to Pre School unless they want something else with their lunch.

Please do not bring your child in clothes that you do not want to get dirty; activities are free for the children to choose so we cannot promise they will stay clean!!! Please ensure they always have a change of clothes available as even if not needed for toileting reasons they can get wet, painty or muddy at various activities. If you would like to order any uniform please see Tamsin, it is priced at £7 for a polo shirt and £10 for a sweatshirt. We do currently have some in stock!

Emergency contacts and children's details



Please remember to keep us informed if phone numbers and/or email addresses change. Also, if you will not be available to contact on a particular day whilst we have your child at preschool please ensure we have an alternative contact number.

Please also inform us of any changes to your child's health and wellbeing and anything that may affect your child at pre-school.

Accidents & Injuries at home

We understand that young children have lots of bumps, grazes, bruises etc and this is expected. However, we do need to document any injuries that children may come in with from home, as well as accidents they have at pre school. Many of you will be familiar with having to complete 'existing injury' forms when you drop off your child, and we understand this can sometimes be time consuming. Therefore I am attaching an existing injury form to this newsletter so that everyone will receive a copy by email- please save it and use where possible (we will need a hard copy). If you are unable to print the forms off we will have blank forms ready in the parents cupboard in the corridor for you to use when you need to. Please ask if you have any queries and ensure you hand the form to a member of staff before you drop your child off.

Sickness & Absence

Please could you ensure you either ring or text Pre School by 9.30am if your child is going to absent, giving a reason for absence. If we have not heard from you by 10am, it is our policy to call you to find out why your child is not in.

Please remember that if your child has sickness and/or diarrhoea then they must stay off for 48 hours after the last 'attack'

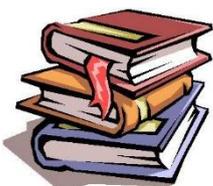
We are aware that there has been a case of Chicken pox at the local school so if your child has not had it and they are feeling under the weather please look out for spots. If you want any advice please speak to a member of staff.

Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers



We don't have long to collect more Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers, so if you have any lurking in handbags or anywhere else please post them into our collection box and hopefully we can order some more valuable resources for our children. Thank you!

Pre School Lending Library



We will be introducing a lending library to pre school so that your child can borrow a book to share with you at home. Home learning and reading with children at home has great benefits for communication and language skills in young children and we would like to encourage this. Children can choose a book from the library box, have it stamped and written in a book, and then just let us know when you have returned it.

'Colin' and 'Doris' the Meppershall Bears



Colin and Doris have been our Pre School Bears who have been going home with children for a long time now. They are looking very tired and grubby despite many washes in the machine so..we have decided it is time for them to 'retire'. They will still be at pre school but we now have a lovely new bear who can go home with one child at a time, with a 'diary' to fill in all the exciting things they have done. We are just waiting for a new t-shirt for the bear and then will be introducing him/her to the children...so watch this space and look out for the bear very soon



facebook

We have a fairly new facebook group – so please if you are on facebook and haven't already liked our page please do so and spread the word! Our old facebook page was not set up as a group, so the new one is much better..or will be!! Please encourage friends/family with children to like our page so we can advertise our pre school and events now and in the future. We will try and post updates, reminders and pictures on there when possible! <https://www.facebook.com/Meppershallps/>

And finally.....

Dates for your diaries-

Please keep this safe as there are lots of important dates this term!!

- Mon 2nd May Bank Holiday Monday – Pre School Closed
- Tues 3rd May Pre School open all day (instead of 5/5)
- Tues 3rd May (am) Allotment Visit – Helpers needed please!**
- Weds 4th May (am) Reverend Roni visiting to read her 'favourite story'
- Thurs 5th May PRE SCHOOL CLOSED - VILLAGE HALL IS USED AS POLLING STATION
- Monday 9th May (am) Allotment Visit – Helpers needed please!**
- Wednesday 18th May (am) Allotment Visit – Helpers needed please!**
- Monday 23rd May (am) Allotment Visit – Helpers needed please!**
- Weds 18th May-8pm Pre School AGM at Village Hall (snooker room)- all parents/carers welcome. Refreshments available.
- Mon 30 May – Fri 3 June – HALF TERM WEEK
- Weds 8th June -10am Mrs Gunn to visit from Meppershall Academy to meet children going up to school
- Mon 13th June- 7pm Evening meeting for parents of children going to Meppershall Academy

Weds 15th June – 10.00-11.30am Children going to Meppershall Academy going to school.
(They will need to be taken to & collected from the lower school by parents /carers – please let us know if they will/ will not be coming to us afterwards)

Thurs 16th & Fri 17th June – Secret Fathers Day Shop (run by committee) details to follow

Sat 18th June - 9.30-10.30am – Fathers Day Breakfast in village hall (details to follow)

Mon 20th June (pm) - Pre School Sports Day – all children invited to attend 12:15 - 3:15
(Details to follow)

Tues 21st June – Open all day instead of 23/6

Thurs 23rd June – PRE SCHOOL CLOSED- Village Hall used as a polling station

Fri 24th June - 10am Mrs Gunn to visit from Meppershall Academy to meet children going up to school

Sat 25th June – Meppershall Summer Fair – we will have a stand with bottle hoopla, and a pirate treasure dig for the children. **We will need some volunteers to help on a rota basis on the day as well as bottle donations please..these can be alcoholic or otherwise, bubble bath etc.. Please help where you can!**

Mon 4th – Fri 8th July – Parent Consultation Week. Progress books will be sent home the week before for you to look at.

Fri 8th July - School Step Up Day - Children will visit school for the morning 09:00-11:30 (for Meppershall Academy) (They will need to be taken to & collected from the lower school by parents/carers)

Weds 13th July – Teddy Bears picnic for children going to Meppershall Academy, at Meppershall Academy 10:30-11:30. (They will need to be taken to & collected from the lower school by parents/carers)

Fri 15th July (pm) - Teddy Bears picnic at the Rectory and look around the church with Reverend Roni. (All children invited – details to follow) **Helpers needed please!**

Fri 22nd July - Leavers Show & party day and last day of term! Details to follow but all children will be included and can take part in the show and party activities.

Mon 5th September 2016 – Back to Pre School for the start of another busy term!

If you are able to help for any of the dates above where helpers are needed please speak to Tamsin or Andrea. We will have more dates to visit the allotment after half term too and will let you know when these are but they do depend both on the weather and volunteers. Many Thanks in advance.

Thank you all for your continuing support.

Details on various special events will be sent out to you as and as soon as we have these available!

Pre –School Staff