



Registered Charity Number 1155711
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February 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back to Pre-School and we hope you all enjoyed a lovely half term! Here is a short summary of some of the things we all enjoyed during the first half of the spring term.

The children returned after Christmas with lots of lovely stories about their experiences with family and friends. We love to hear their news and you can help us by adding pictures and observations to your child's Tapestry Journal.

At the beginning of the spring term we adapted our learning environment for our morning children, to feature an increased range of number and literacy opportunities. Registration now includes a number recognition activity and our 'snack time' routine includes an opportunity to find name cards.

As children create drawings, paintings and models, the practitioners use whiteboards to demonstrate letter formation to many of the morning children who now attempt to write their own names. If your child is not yet ready to attempt letter formation, please don't be alarmed. The important thing is that the children feel positive about 'having a go'. When children are not yet ready to form letters, we will always praise their efforts without adding pressure to write a certain way.

To support the development of writing skills further, this half term we intend to provide an enhanced provision of activities which target fine motor development.

Our afternoon children have particularly enjoyed our 'circle time' sessions. Our 'circle time' is a short whole group activity which takes place at the end of each session. Particularly for our younger children, it is an opportunity to develop listening and attention skills and to learn to follow appropriate behavioural expectations. Michele has prepared some lovely new story sacks with lots of wonderful props and visuals which we will introduce to the children during these sessions. Some favourite activities in the afternoon last half term have been our 'Goldilocks' magnet story, 'Stir the Porridge' song, musical instruments and calming music with sensory lights.

Events last half term included, Burns Night, Chinese New Year and our annual sponsored bounce. To celebrate Burns Night, we used our map to introduce children to Scotland and many children 'had a go' by making a tartan pattern. Morning and afternoon children contributed to the creation of our Chinese Dragon which we all used to do the dragon dance! Some of the children played cymbals and drums whilst others followed each other to make the dragon move to the music. Lots of our morning children made some Chinese writing and used the chopsticks in the home corner, at snack time and in our Chinese New Year themed "messy play with noodles" activity.

During the last two weeks before half term, the children bounced on the trampoline for our sponsored bounce event! Thank you to everyone who has sponsored the children so generously and to everyone who has already brought in sponsor money. If you still have sponsor money to donate, please bring it in this week, so we can let you all know what the total money raised is.

During the next half term, we will introduce all the children to our iPad/Kindles so that we can share their Tapestry Journals with them. For the youngest children, this activity will provide a social opportunity and the chance to develop language skills such as listening and attention. Our older children will enjoy the chance to talk about their experiences enabling them to explore ideas about the world and their place in it.

Donation List

Thank you for the generous donations towards our Pre-School supplies/consumables. As you know the Pre-School is looking at all possible ways to enable us to reduce our costs. The donations of supplies/consumables have been really helpful, and we will therefore continue to issue a donation request list on a regular basis. If you can donate something, please put your name against one or two items on the list. Thank you!

Library Box

We have started a library of children's books at Pre-School. There is a large box under the registration table in reception at the Children's Centre. You are all welcome to borrow books from the library box, to take home to read with your child/children. Please return the books once you have finished with them, so that other families can also enjoy them!

Name Tags/Bags/Clothing

A reminder to name all clothing and bags; please can bags be clearly named on the outside. Children should only have a small bag. As we are so limited with space on our pegs, could parents encourage their children to put their bags on the shelf under the bench, or on the blue trolley, to help with space for coats. For our morning children, please help to encourage independence for school by allowing your child to take their coats off and hang them up independently. If your child has been sent home in a change of clothing, or a second-hand Pre-School sweatshirt or t-shirt, please will you return this to us.

Here are details of some of the things planned for the second half of the spring term.

World Book Day - Thursday 7th March

We will be celebrating World Book Day and children can come to Pre-School dressed as a book character on this day. However, dressing up is optional and we do understand if not all children wish to do so. If children also want to bring in their favourite book from home, please can you ensure that it is clearly labelled with your child's name.

Red Nose Day – Friday 15th March

All children are invited to come to Pre-School dressed in something red or spotty on Friday 15th March. We will have a collection bucket on the door.

Monday 25th March – Our Chicken Eggs Arrive!

Using funds raised by our sponsored bounce we have been able to order chicken eggs from Living Eggs, so that the children can see chicks hatch and help to look after them as they grow! The eggs will be at Pre-School from Monday 25th March. Once hatched, the chicks will stay with us

until Friday 5th April. All parents/carers are more than welcome to come in to Pre-School when dropping off their child to have a peek!

Easter Hat Parade – Thursday 4th April 2.15pm (afternoon children)

This very popular event will take place on Thursday 4th April. We would like parents to make an “Easter hat” at home with their child and bring it with them on the day of the parade. If you are stuck for ideas, then please ask your child’s key person! The children will then proudly show their hat at the parade (in the garden if the weather is kind to us). Parents are invited to come in to watch at 2.15pm and there will be music with Catherine and songs for you to enjoy and a surprise visit from the Easter Bunny.

Easter Egg Hunt – Friday 5th April (morning children)

Our morning children will enjoy an Easter egg hunt in the garden on our last day of term. There will also be a surprise visit from the Easter Bunny!

Dates for later on in the school year

Friday 10th May – Zoolab Visit (Morning Children)

Zoolab will be visiting our morning children with their collection of exotic animals for the children to learn about, see and hold.

Tuesday 11th June (afternoon children) – Messy Play Afternoon

Our afternoon families are invited to come to Pre-School with their child to enjoy a ‘messy play’ afternoon. This is an opportunity for you to get ‘messy’ as you join in with a variety of activities with your child.

There will be no usual Pre-school session on this afternoon and all children should be accompanied by an adult (it doesn’t have to be a parent, it can be a grandparent or any other carer) who will engage in the activities with them. We will give you more details nearer the time.

Wednesday 12th June (morning children) - Outing to Pizza Express

Our morning children will visit Pizza Express on Wednesday 12th June where they will make their own pizza, which they will be able to take home. All morning children are invited to come on the outing, so if your child doesn’t normally come to Pre-School on a Wednesday, please keep this date free if you can. A letter with more details will be sent to families nearer the time.

Friday 12th July – Bocketts Farm Outing Morning Children (no afternoon session on this day)

Our annual outing to Bocketts Farm will take place on Friday 12th July. Once again, this outing is for all morning children, even if they don’t normally come to Pre-School on a Friday. More details will follow nearer the time. **Pre-School will be closed for the afternoon session on this day.**

If you have any questions at all, or if you have any concerns about your child, then please just let us know!

St Martin’s Pre-School Team