



FIRST STEPS NURSERY

MARCH 2020 NEWSLETTER

SPRING IS ON THE WAY!

The evenings are starting to get lighter & the weather a little milder so hopefully we are over the very wet winter now. As we move into spring, we have some further updates & news.

Please have a read of the information we need to share, important reminders for you & dates to add to your diary. As always we would appreciate your support to help ensure the smooth running of the nursery for the children, you & us.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

NEW CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) INFORMATION – Advice has been emailed out however, following new guidance advised yesterday evening we are now asking that if anyone has the symptoms of a fever over 37.8 or a new continuous dry cough you should isolate your WHOLE household for 14 days. Please continue to keep high standards of good hygiene for you & your family. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all on behalf of myself and the staff for your help and co-operation with the children's hand washing in the mornings. It seems to be going smoothly so a BIG thank you. For those who are already self-isolating, please stay safe.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES – The amendments & updates have now been approved by the Governors. These are available on the website for your perusal. I have attached the link for your ease

<https://www.firststepsnursery-yateley.co.uk/policies-and-procedures>

As before, when these documents are issued, we automatically, as default accept that you adhere to these policies & procedures by having your child/ren attend our setting. Any issues, please let me know. As with any updated document, this latest version will supersede any previous copy you have received in the past.

NO CASH OR CHEQUE PAYMENTS FOR FEE'S – Update. We need to advise that cash AND cheques will no longer be accepted as payment of invoices. This is a requirement of Yateley School. All school payments are made online. Sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

FUNDING – All parents of children who are eligible for funding the term after they turn 3 years old have been emailed with all the relevant information on how to claim along with the forms that need completing.

If you are a new parent claiming extended funding, you **MUST** check your eligibility online, obtain your code and pass this to me along with your completed forms and a copy of either your child's passport or birth certificate as proof of date of birth. I am required to validate your application **BEFORE** Tuesday 31st March, for you to be able to claim for the summer term.

All existing parents claiming extended funding **MUST** re-check their eligibility every 3 months and re-check **BEFORE** Tuesday 31st March to be able to claim for the summer term.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

INVOICES - Please can you all use **YATNUR** followed by either your **current** invoice number or your family name as your reference when making your monthly payments (unless you pay via the tax free government scheme where you each have a unique reference). Please can you then email Tara at finance@firststepsnursery-yateley.co.uk once your payment has been made?

Payments to the nursery are made to HCC (Hampshire County Council). All HCC payments are paid into a central account (this is for all businesses associated with HCC) and are then allocated out to each setting etc. The YATNUR reference is unique to us at First Steps (including Home from Home) and tells HCC to apply those payments to us. The family name or invoice number then allows us to allocate each payment to the correct account.

If Tara knows a payment has been made, she can go in to our account, locate a payment and allocate it to your account more quickly & efficiently, reducing delays in payments reaching your accounts. If payments have not reached your account by 14th of each month, the system adds the 10% late fee to each account.

If monthly payments have not been allocated to your account, the balance shows as a brought forward on your next invoice.

Invoices are emailed out at the end of each month. If you have not received your invoice by the end of the current month, please inform a member of staff or email Tara.

MONEY FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

Can we please remind you to bring the correct money in for your child/ren's hot school meals in the morning? We have to pay the school kitchen and some mornings, do not have enough money to pay them.

UPCOMING DATES FOR THE DIARY

Friday 20th March – Mother's day. Unfortunately we have decided to cancel this event.

Easter Holiday Monday 6th April – Friday 17th April – Please provide your child/ren with a healthy packed lunch. Please ensure this is named and contains a freezer pack. We do not have sufficient space in our fridges to keep all the children's lunchboxes chilled.

Thursday 28th May – Our annual Toddle. This year our chosen theme is "Superhero's". We would like to invite everyone to join us, including older siblings. The toddle will start at 14:00 outside the main nursery building followed by a picnic on the field! Sponsor forms will be handed out to you before the event and all the money raised will go towards resources for the Nursery. Thank you in advance.

Thursday 25th June – Concept Photography will be coming in to take beautiful professional photographs of your child/ren. If your child does not normally attend nursery on this day but you would like some photographs taken, please contact Heidi to book a slot. (Please note these slots will be before 10am).

Thursday 23rd July – Pre-School Graduation – details to follow.

OTHER GENERAL REMINDERS

BREAKFAST AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUB -

If you would like to use the services of Home from Home, please contact Jan Walsh on 01252 746973 or 07761 133838 or email: homefromhome@yateleys.com.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SAYING GOODBYE

We are sorry to say that Rachel in Pre-School is leaving us. Rachel & her husband are moving away & her last day will be Friday 17th April. Please join us in wishing her all the very best for the future. We will also

be losing Anne, who is also moving away. Anne has been cover staff with us for some time now and we are sorry to see her go. Anne's last day will be Thursday 28th May.

LITERACY

In line with up to date guidance in Early Years, we will now be encouraging our children's learning and communication by introducing a "book of the week" and "song of the week". For those children who are ready, we will continue to introduce letters and sounds but this will not be a particular focus for all children every week.

Current guidance states that it is far more beneficial to share stories and rhymes with children right from the earliest years to help them develop vital communication skills. Reading to and with children and talking about books, can enrich a child's language skill set, promote early language and literacy, advance a child's oral language, boost young children's engagement with books and helps to lay the foundations for reading and writing.

Studies have confirmed the positive effect reading has on language development. The importance of shared reading: "book language" is much more linguistically complex than ordinary conversation and is a crucial link between children's early language skills and life.

AND WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN UP TO.....?

PRE-SCHOOL

Pre-school are learning about spring. They are looking at flowers and baby animals. They will also be discussing farms and asking if the children have visited farms. The children can tell their stories and share their experiences of being at a farm. Pre-School will also be making Mother's Day craft.

LITTLE LEARNERS

Little Learners are exploring all things spring along with the mini beasts we tend to find this time of year, such as butterflies & bee's. They will also be experimenting with plants and taking part in some planting of their own. It's exciting for the children to be watching things grow.

TODDLER ROOM

Toddlers are learning about spring, exploring sensory materials and creating craft. They will continue to explore this throughout the next few months, going on nature walks, collecting leaves and flowers. They will be creating a new display to show off all their amazing work! Toddlers will also be learning numbers and looking at colours through play. They are excited for a fun filled spring term!

BABY ROOM

Babies are also learning about and playing "spring" like. They are talking about St Patrick's Day and four leaf clovers and all things Easter. They have lots of egg-citing messy play planned. Their "book of the month" for March is Postman Bear and they will be participating in some posting activities and looking forward to choosing more exciting stories.

The toddler and baby room staff would like to thank all parents who have provided them with a spare dummy for their child/ren, to be kept at nursery. This is working very well.

Best Wishes

Heidi

