



The Ark Newsletter

January/February 2024



Staff

We would like you to all join us in welcoming a new member of staff to the Ark team. Michelle started with us at the beginning of January and has joined Sue and the after school team. Michelle is NVQ level 3 qualified with lots of experience working with both preschool and older children. Unfortunately Amy our baby room leader is currently off sick and we are hoping she will be back with us soon. Heather Williams has returned to The Ark and will be doing some bank work for us.

Children's activities

This term we have been encouraging new children to settle into and explore the toddler room and their new environment, to make relationships with their key worker and other children. The toddler room encourages and supports children to get to know routines and expectations within the room such as where things are kept, to put toys away safely and to play in a safe environment. It enables children to join in and play with each other and their key person where they can explore both indoors and outdoors in all weathers! The toddler room gives children the opportunity to become independent in personal care such as dressing/undressing, feeding/drinking, toileting and handwashing.

Our youngest children are developing so many new skills, sitting upright, cruising round furniture, walking independently, taking off their own shoes and socks and washing their hands. Their personalities are changing too, and we have had so much delight in watching them grow in confidence and sharing in their smiles and laughter each day. We continue to love books and rhymes and the children independently choose their favourite puppet from the song bag, indicating which rhyme they'd like to sing. They sit beautifully for stories and join in with the ones they know well.

Preschool have also been busy making bird feeders for their gardens at home. The children mixed together bird seed with lard covering pine cones with the mixture. The children made binoculars to watch the birds in our garden and at home as part of the RSPB bird watch programme.

The children across the nursery have been celebrating Chinese New Year with noodle play, making lanterns, Chinese symbol painting, exploring rice and setting up their own 'Chinese restaurant' in the role play area.



A Few Reminders

We are very keen to promote independence in our children and we would be grateful if your child could be dressed in clothes that allow them to access the toilets independently e.g. elasticated jogging bottoms. Please could you ensure that your child wears shoes which they can fasten themselves and that they can put their own coat on. We spend a lot of time outdoors, so a waterproof coat and a pair of wellies are essential. A clean change of clothing is also advisable for **all** children as accidents can happen. We would welcome any spare jogging bottoms as our stocks don't always make their way back to us and we are running low!

Arrival/Collection Times

Please ensure you leave and collect your child at the times booked, as several children have been arriving before their session begins and/or have been collected after their session ends. This is particularly prevalent before the 8.45am session and at the end of the 12.45 – 3.15pm session. If you do occasionally arrive early please wait with your child in the lobby until the start of the booked session. If you are also collecting older siblings from school at 3.15pm, please ensure you collect your child from The Ark first. This is very important as we may breach our OFSTED registration conditions if we do not adhere to correct staff/children ratios. End of the Day; as you are all aware as a setting we operate **8am-6pm**. This means we close the doors at **6pm**, if you require a handover at the end of the day please arrive by 5.50pm so that staff have time to do the handover. If you arrive after this time, handover will be short and limited. Any collections after 6pm will incur a fee.

Administrator

Just a polite reminder that Tracey our administrator works **Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 0830am-5pm**. We ask that if you would like to discuss ongoing

bookings, payments or funding please email or pop in during Traceys working hours. This way we will be able to help you more efficiently as other members of staff maybe included within the ratios for the children.

A polite reminder, Please, please, please do not use your mobile phone once inside the nursery gate.

Dates for your Diary

World Book Day Thursday 7th March

Easter Bingo Friday 8th March at Child Okeford Village Hall doors open at 7pm eyes down at 730pm. Any donations of prizes we be gratefully received.

Red Nose Day Friday 17th March

Hey Day Saturday 29th June.

Pre School Graduation Picnic

This years Preschool graduation picnic will be held on **Saturday 13th July** in The Ark Garden. All families welcome

Term Dates

Spring term 2024

Wednesday 3rd January-Thursday 28th March

Half term and holiday Club 12th-16th February

Inset/Holiday club day Monday 19th February

Easter holiday Thursday 28th March – 15th April

Good Friday 29th March the Ark Closed

Easter Monday 1st April the Ark closed

Holiday club Tuesday 2nd April – Friday 12th April

Summer term 2024

Monday 15th April- Tuesday 23rd July

Half Term and holiday Club Tuesday 28th – 31st May

The Ark Closure week 26th-30th August

The Ark is open all year round **except all Bank Holidays**. This year's summer closure week will be 26th-30th August 2024.

Sarah

Nursery Manager