

**Bathampton Preschool Playgroup**

**Term 1 2021**

We would like to extend you all a warm welcome and welcome back. We as a staff team are all very much all looking forward to starting up again and welcoming the children back to playgroup. We hope that you have all had a good summer holiday and that the children are looking forward to coming in next week.

**Staff**

We have change in staff this year having said goodbye to Cara at the end of the summer term. We are very pleased to be welcoming Jane as a permanent staff member and Rebecca as a new staff member. We are all looking forward to her starting and getting to know her better. Emma is going to be back working 3 days a week so will be in on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and we still have Sarah and Holly on our bank staff list.

**Wednesday**

We are pleased to let you know that we are finally (after much work from Liz) going to be able to run a Wednesday session until 3pm for the children. If you would like your child to stay for the afternoon session on a Wednesday please can you let me know. As with the Tuesday afternoon session we would like your child to be settled and happy at Playgroup before they stay for a longer school length day. Also if your child still has a nap in the afternoon please speak to us about it as it may not be the right environment for them to stay.

**Other groups**

A lot of the other hall users will be coming back to the hall this September for the first time since March 2020. This does mean that on a Wednesday there will be a keep fit class coming in just after 3pm so prompt pick up is really important for those that stay on that day. We will have the children all ready to go just before 3pm at 2.55 so can we ask you are waiting for them then. The lady running the class has some anxieties about the cross over (as do we) as the class is for more elderly ladies who will be more vulnerable to serious illness from Covid. They will be arriving just after 3 and ideally there will be no parents left outside the hall when they come. They plan to come up the slope and through the side gate into the side hall so can we please ask that you pick up your child and leave the premises straight away on this day leaving through the church car park not down the slope so if there is a cross over it is minimised.

There will also be a bridge group and an art class coming in when we leave on Mondays and a yoga group on a Friday so can we please can we ask you do the same

Covid is still very much a thing, and with numbers still so high and rising can we ask that your child is well enough to come to playgroup before you send them in. I know we are about to enter the season of colds with winter bugs around but if your child is displaying any of the symptoms of coronavirus you must keep them at home and arrange a pcr test. It is really important you take the time to read the attached covid guidelines. We are now in the position of not having to isolate if we are a close contact of someone who has tested positive if we are double jabbed or under the age of 18 so would not have to close the playgroup with one case. However we are still a small staff team and if we do not have enough staff member available for work to open we would still have to close. We thank you for your patience and support in this.

**Key person**

When your child starts with us they will be given a key person. You should have received a letter explaining the role of the key person and who your child’s key person will be. If your child was with us last year their Key Person may have changed and we will let you know if this has happened.

We also have an **All About Me** document for new parents to fill in about their child. If you have not already been given one then please can you collect one from us on your child’s first day. Can new parents please bring in the registration form you have been sent with you on your child’s first day if you have not already sent it back to me. This is really important as it contains information we need to know about your child and you will not be able to leave them with us if we don’t have it. For new children I also need to see their birth certificate so please can you bring this in with their registration form and I will take a copy and return it to you.

Each child has their own book called a Learning Journeywhich is kept in their own drawer at the front of the hall. For those of you who are unaware we keep records of your child’s development in the form of observations, photographs and any work they have done in their books as well as the development records we do three times a year. Please could we ask you to send in any home learning that your child has done for us to put in their book. This gives us a bigger picture of your child’s development as they may be doing things at home they do not show us at playgroup.

We have ‘wow’ notes to celebrate your child’s achievements so if there is anything at all you would like to share with us all please let us know. This can be shared at carpet time and then added to your child’s learning journal.

**Topics**

We will be concentrating in the first term on settling in and getting the children used to our daily routine. Returning children may also need help remembering the routine of the day and the rules of playgroup that they all helped to put together last year. The summer holiday is a long time for them away from Playgroup so we will be reminding ourselves of these in the first weeks back. We will also be learning all about the new children and their families and looking at the changing season.

Our **topics** this term will be:

**Settling in, Harvest and Autumn**

**Pre School groups.** The more focused activities we do with our pre-schoolers will begin in term 2 when the children have had a time to settle and get used to our routine.

**Funding**

The Government provides a free entitlement for all 3 and 4 year olds to attend an early years provider, starting the term after their 3rd birthday. All children are entitled to **15 hours** free childcare. If your child is now eligible to receive their funded hours (that is, if their 3rd birthday fell between 1st April and 31st August) then I will claim online for you. I will need to see your child’s birth certificate before I can do this so please bring it in along with their registration form. If you are claiming the **30 hour** funding please can you email me your 30 hour code and your national insurance number if you have not already done so. If your child is not yet eligible for their funding then you will receive a bill for the hours they attend from our Treasurer Louise. Prompt payment of bills is very important and helps her a lot!

**Changing weather**

Please could you ensure that you send your child in with suitable clothing for the changing weather, particularly a rain jacket/coat for outdoor play. We will aim to be outside a lot and try to go out in all weathers (almost) so a pair of named wellington boots that are left at Playgroup is essential. Please can we also ask you put a change of clothes in your child’s bag in case of accidents or if they get wet or muddy outside.

**Snack**

We are asking you to send your child in with their own snack in an easy to manage container that they will keep in their bag and get out at snack time. There will be no shared snack for the time being, but there will be milk available provided by us. For those who are staying for lunch we ask that you send your child with a healthy packed lunch (**no chocolate bars or sweets)** that the children can easily manage themselves. No tricky to open containers please. **We are also a nut free setting.** If your child stays on a Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon they will need a snack for the afternoon aswell.

**Committee**

Our Committee chair Liz will be in touch with you all to tell you about the important role of the Committee in the running of the Playgroup and how you can get involved. We are now on the look out to recruit new committee members as some of the current ones move on as their children are beginning school. We cannot operate without a Committee so please consider how you could help out.

**Drop off and pick up**

When you drop your child off in the morning the front door will be locked for safeguarding purposes. Please can we ask you to wait outside at your child’s start time for a staff member to open the door to let your child in. if you are going to be later please can you let me know by ringing the playgroup phone 07716600269. The children will be helped to hang up their bag when they come into the hall and be taken to wash their hands.

Please can your child have in their bag a named water bottle, a change of clothes, a snack and a lunch box if they are staying for lunch.

The children are not allowed to bring in any toys from home at all. If they need a comforter these can be placed in their bag and will be taken out by a member of staff if it is needed. No other toys are to be bought in.

**Pick up**

At pick up time please wait outside at your finish time and a member of staff will come and hand over your child to you. Handovers will be kept short but if you do have something you wish to discuss please let the staff member know and a time for talking can be arranged. As per the guidelines we no longer have to wear masks at the door but please can we ask that you all respect other peoples space and keep a distance.

**Prompt pick up**

When you are dropping off or collecting your child from Playgroup please can we ask you to be prompt as mentioned above and not to wait around in front of the hall so there is space for others to wait and to leave the space clear for the next group to come in.

**Parking**

The church has kindly allowed us to continue to park in the car park next door **but this is only for drop off and pick up only**. This car park does not belong to the village hall and we are fortunate that the church allows us to use it but we are unable to leave cars there during the session or if you are going to the park after picking up so please can we ask you all to be aware of this. Can we please ask everybody to be especially careful when driving into and out of the carpark as well as watching your children when cars are moving as the space is small and there is not a lot of room to move around especially with the one way system in place.. Please also be aware of the white posts they have put in to stop cars driving on the grass. At some point soon the church will be having some building work done so the carpark will be unavailable for us to use. They are going to let me know when this will be so that I can let you all know.

We look forward to seeing you all this coming week.

Lisa.