



Dates for your diary

Group session at Allensford Park: **Saturday 23rd September, 10:30am**

Coffee Morning to raise money for Macmillan: **Friday 20th October 09:30 - 11:00am** (All baked / faked donations are welcomed and very much appreciated)

Autumn Half-term: **Term-time only** children break-up **Friday 27th October**, return **Monday 6th November**

Stay and Play Christmas events – **Thursday 14th December** (details to follow)

Christmas holidays: **Term-time only** children break-up **Tuesday 19th December** and return **Wednesday 3rd January**

Nursery Christmas closure: **Break-up Friday 22nd December** and reopen **Wednesday 3rd January**

Reminders

If you would like your child to have breakfast at Nursery, please drop them off by 8:15am as the next stage of our daily rhythms begins at 8:30am.

Please bring a labelled water bottle each session. Due to recommendations for dental hygiene, we kindly ask you do not put juice in your child's bottle.

Please ensure all of your children's belongings are labelled, including water bottles and clothing. Many children have the same items in the same sizes and labels prevent mix-ups occurring, particularly as children become more independent and remove their own clothing.

As part of our efforts to be more sustainable, we kindly ask that parents provide a wet bag for any of their children's dirty clothing to go into to reduce the use of plastic nappy sacks.

During the colder months your child may be wearing wellington boots or bulky footwear. You are welcome to provide some indoor shoes or slippers for their comfort during indoor play. Also, socks are more likely to get wet during play. This is an item we do not have a lot of, so we advise you provide some spare pairs in your child's bag.

We have children with allergies and therefore kindly ask children do not bring food items in their bag.

Firstly, we would like to extend a very warm welcome to all our new children and families, as well as Miss Hartley who has joined the nursery family and is going to be spending lots of time in *The Bridges*. We have also welcomed new practitioners Miss Donald, Miss Donohue and Miss Dee to the Nursery family. We have recently said goodbye to some of our children who have moved on to their new adventures at school and Miss Harrison who is moving on to complete her teaching qualifications. At this time of year, the social dynamics of *The Bridges* changes and children who have already been part of the family for some time often experience a growth in confidence and maturity as they become the oldest, more experienced members of the group. We would also like to welcome back all of our children who have been off during the Summer – we can't wait to hear all about your adventures!

Here at Shotley Bridge Nursery School we strive to provide the best possible care and education for all children. As practitioners act as significant figures in children's lives, it is important to us to ensure we have a relationship with not just the child, but their families too. In order to strengthen the link between home and Nursery, we ask parents to share photographs of their child's family, experiences and interests using the ParentZone app to allow children the opportunity to share these with practitioners and, as they grow, their friends too. This proves to be an effective tool for building language and recall skills, as well as allowing children to feel a little more secure in the Nursery environment, a fundamental requirement in learning. All photographs from home continue to provoke a lot of interest amongst the children and spark lots of conversations! If you are unsure how to upload photographs to the app, please do not hesitate to ask.

Whilst our Summer weather does seem to have been short-lived, we would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that children do go outdoors in all weathers. We aim to reflect indoor learning outdoors as well as making the most of the natural elements that provide endless learning opportunities and provoke children's inner curiosities, including bugs and mud! Increased time outdoors is proven to improve motor development and impulse control whilst reducing the impact of stress and providing natural intake of Vitamin D. When outdoors, children are not limited by space and can engage in increased physical activity which, in turn, uses excess energy, making it easier for children to focus on learning opportunities and make those essential brain connections necessary for development. We provide Nursery waterproofs and we do have some wellington boots (though limited on sizes) but politely ask that you bring appropriate footwear and clothing for your child to go outdoors as the cold weather sets in in the coming weeks / months.

We strongly believe that hands-on interaction with nature's cyclical processes is the most effective way for children to gain an understanding of the world around them. We have had some fantastic successes with our fruit and vegetable patch this year in which the children have led every single stage from seed to plate and enjoyed the fruits of their labour during snack times. Our most recent experience was harvesting the potatoes we have grown, and this has provoked additional curiosity about the natural world amongst the children. We will be supporting this into the new term with observations of the changing season and the impact this has on plants. With some red and orange leaves already blowing into the Nursery courtyard stimulating lots of conversations, this area of provision has lots of exciting potential and we look forward to seeing where the children take this!

Self-regulation is a term you may have heard used by practitioners quite frequently. This refers to children developing the ability to manage their own emotions in appropriate ways consistently and is not a skill we expect children to have fully mastered when they move on to school. We focus on supporting children to develop the foundation of skills that will lead to their independent management of emotions in the future and one of our tools is 'The Colour Monster'. This is a story which ascribes colours to different emotions, and we use this to help children ascribe language to the different feelings they encounter and talk about what we can do to help us feel better when we experience those more challenging emotions like anger and sadness. This story is proving to be of huge interest to the children at the moment and we are going to be extending this into the new term with introduction of additional props. If your child refers to any of their learning relating to this at home, we would love for you to share this with us!

Heuristic play is the term used to describe play with open-ended materials and resources often referred to as 'loose parts'. As you may be aware, our provision is heavily based upon use of loose parts in order to provide the vast array of benefits to our children, including development of critical thinking skills, imagination, and creativity. For more information on this aspect of our provision, please refer to our booklet 'The importance of loose parts in our provision'. We always welcome donations of loose parts to add to our environment and ask you to consider this before disposing of what may seem like 'rubbish' or use this concept as inspiration for treasures you could look for whilst out in nature. Examples include, but are not limited to; bottle corks, cardboard tubes (not toilet roll), bottle / container lids, yoghurt pots, cellophane sweet wrappers, curtain rings, pinecones, shells, sticks, leaves, wallpaper offcuts, egg boxes, hair rollers, kitchen utensils, beads, stones, bracelets and jewellery boxes.

We recently embarked upon some training with Debby Shaw from Durham County Council Early Years Team and are implementing a new approach to our mathematics provision. Please find attached some more information about this approach and how you can support your child's mathematics development at home.

Things to note

Recently we have noticed an increase in children bringing in toys from home. We recognise that children are very proud of their belongings and keen to show their peers and practitioners however, they can be a cause of a lot of frustration amongst the children and can also provoke a lot of upset if they go missing or get damaged. We kindly ask that you ensure your child does not bring any toys (not including comforters) in from home and upload a photo to the ParentZone app instead to still allow their desire to show their toys off to be fulfilled.

In *The Bridges* we ask that all children wear Nursery uniforms. These do not need to be branded however, if you wish to order some you can do so at: www.myclothing.com. However, we have a very large supply of pre-loved nursery polo shirts, jumpers and cardigans in excellent condition available in reception for a donation of choice to The Children's Fund which contributes to outings to local shops and new resources. As part of our drive to be more sustainable we encourage all parents and carers to consider having a look through the items we have available before purchasing new ones and we also have additional items not displayed if you require specific sizes.

With colder weather approaching some children are prone to cracked lips and such like. Moisturising creams, lip balms and the like do not need to be prescribed however they must be unopened and clearly labelled with your child's name to prevent any cross contamination.

As always, we would like to thank you for your continued support, *The Bridges* Team.