

## **St Catherine's Independent Nursery - Newsletter 6 – February 2019**

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Dear Parents and Carers,

St Catherine's R.C. Primary School will be closed for half term from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February.

For those parents who are accessing the **FREE** funding nursery places may we politely remind you that the funding is only available for 38 weeks of the year. Therefore, during the week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> February children accessing this funding will not be in nursery. We look forward to your return on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February, enjoy your weeks holiday.

Nursery is open for business as usual and packed lunches will be required for all full-time children, as the school kitchen will be closed.

### **Dates for your Diary**

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> February – Half-term for funded only children**

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April – Parent's Evening**

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April – Last day of Spring term for funded only children**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April – Nursery closes for Easter break – all children**

**Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April – Nursery re-opens after Easter break – for all children**

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May – Bank holiday – Nursery closed**

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May – Bank holiday – Nursery closed**

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May – Half-term for funded only children**

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July – Parent's Evening**

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July – Last day of the Summer term for funded only children**

### **Mathematics in the home**

This half term we are also mainly focusing on Mathematics and urge parents to get involved at home to teach their child essential mathematic life skills.

Maths is everywhere in the home. With the support of parents, children can grasp many mathematical concepts through their play.

Children will begin to:

- know and understand early maths language of measurement, shapes, spaces, positions, early numbers, order and patterns
- know the sequence of numbers
- begin to understand positional words, e.g. in, on, outside
- show an awareness of time
- be aware of shapes in their environment
- be aware of 1-to-1 correspondence
- acquire new vocabulary
- learn number rhymes and songs, e.g. one, two, buckle my shoe etc.
- be aware of conservation

When we say a child “knows her numbers” what we often mean is that she can recite the names of numbers in ascending order. This is quite useful to be able to do, but it means very little in itself.

Children need to come to know what the number system really means. They can be helped to do this through play. One of the first things they have to learn is about conservation – that 3 is always 3 no matter how it is arranged or presented, whether it is the number 3, the letters for three, 3 bricks, 3 buttons on a coat or 3 Billy Goats Gruff. Before a child can understand numbers for things that can be seen – 3 miles, 3 years old – s/he needs real objects which can be seen and handled with a chance to check that the count is right each time.

Young children have many mathematical experiences in their home environment.

For example:

- they learn about money as they go shopping with parents
- become aware of numbers as they count the stairs to bed
- start to understand the concept of time as they become familiar with the routine of their day – wash, dress, breakfast etc.

A child’s daily life offers many practical opportunities to learn about number, shape, space, sorting and matching.

For instance:

- setting places at the table – a cup for me, a cup for you
- playing with water
- steering the pram
- helping to sort the washing, matching socks, big shirt / small shirt
- tidying up – putting similar items together
- matching lids to saucepans

Here are a few ways in which you can use play to learn mathematical concepts.

### **Sand and Water**

- Using sand can develop mathematical concepts and language, e.g. heavy, light, empty, full, big, little
- Conservation – how much will it hold

- Make shapes and patterns
- Provide boxes and materials of different shapes and sizes to compare weight and quantity
- Look at the differences between wet and dry as a means of looking at weights language
- You can help to promote mathematical language such as – heavy, light, empty, full, long, short, big, small in relevant contexts
- Look at your home environment to develop language, especially positional words – small object in front of big object, behind, in, on.

### **Dough**

The use of dough can help to develop a mathematical understanding for pre-school children.

- Develops mathematical language – short, long, fat, thin
- Make shapes of different dimensions – flat shapes, 3-d shapes
- Create opportunities to compare things that float with things that do not

### **Imaginative Play**

- Simple activities like letting your child set the table for dinner can help develop counting skills, e.g. getting out three pieces of cutlery.
- Involve your child with household activities. After washing, allow your child to sort clothes into different colours, or different types of clothes, e.g. t-shirts and socks. This will help to develop a child's knowledge of shapes and colours.

### **Books and Rhymes**

Enjoy stories and rhymes with your child that has a mathematical element, e.g. "One-two, Buckle my Shoe",

This can also help to develop literacy skills by showing your child that the print reads from left to right.

Let your child count out items in the books – how many animals are on the page, how many items are blue.

Using rhymes can also help develop your child's awareness of sequencing

### **Physical Play**

- Develop fine motor skills through physical activity, e.g. Sorting out a jigsaw, Threading beads
- Block play or playing with toy cars can help to develop sequencing by encouraging your child to sequence according to size, colour, use (e.g. bike, car, lorry)
- Playing with different sized blocks can help to develop an understanding of weight and dimensions.
- Tidying toys away allows children to sort into different sizes and colours.
- It can also develop mathematical language – first, second, third, how many are blue, which is largest / smallest.

## **Nature**

By planting seeds, you can help to develop your child's understanding of time and the life cycle of plants. Watch as the plants grow and even measure your plant – develop language such as taller.

Teach your child about the different seasons and plant different items at different times of the year to compare colours, flowers, smells.

There are many opportunities for learning Maths through Play. For more ideas on Learning through Play, get a copy of "I Want to Play", a publication full of practical ideas to use at home with young children, available at Early Years, 6c Wild Flower Way, Apollo Road, Belfast, BT12 6TA, Tel: 028 9066 2825

## **Children's Mental Health Week 4<sup>th</sup>- 10<sup>th</sup> Feb**

The Week was set up by the children's mental health charity Place2Be to shine a spotlight on the importance of children and young people's mental health. This year's theme is Healthy: Inside and Out – and they're encouraging everyone to think about how they look after their bodies and minds.

What's it all about?

When we think about healthy living, we tend to focus on looking after our bodies – our physical wellbeing – through food, being active and getting enough sleep.

However, in order to be healthy overall, it's important that we look after our minds – our mental wellbeing – too.

Our bodies and minds are actually very closely linked, so things that we do to improve our physical wellbeing can help our mental wellbeing as well. When we take steps to be Healthy: Inside and Out, it helps us to feel better in ourselves, focus on what we want to do and deal with difficult times.

As parents and carers, you play a very important role in your child's health. Here are a few simple ways you can encourage and support them to look after their body and mind:

Chat with your child about what you do to look after your body and mind, from walking the dog to turning your phone off before bed. Sharing the steps you've taken to stay healthy can set a good example for them – but don't be afraid to admit it if you've struggled! It's important for children to keep trying, even when things are difficult.

Listen – make sure you take time to listen to what your child has to say.

Praise your child and other family members for what they do to look after their body and mind – even if it's small. If your child sees healthy living in a positive light, they're more likely to carry on doing these things throughout life.

Be proud – tell your child that you are proud of them.

Remind them that there's no such thing as a perfect body or mind – and no one is perfectly healthy! Your child might be tempted to compare themselves to other children, especially on social media, but it's important to remember that everyone's bodies and minds are different – and that's something to celebrate.

Do something regularly with your child to be Healthy: Inside and Out. Family life can be very busy and stressful at times. Cooking a meal, sitting down for a family dinner, or going for a walk together can be a great way to stay connected and have fun.

For more information on Children's Mental Health week please follow the link below:

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers/>

The Place2be website link can also be found on our parent app under useful links.

### **Nursery Rhyme of the week**

w/c 4<sup>th</sup> February - 'Ten Fat Sausages'

w/c 11<sup>th</sup> February - 'There were ten in the bed'

w/c 25<sup>th</sup> February - 'Five little speckled frogs'

w/c 5<sup>th</sup> March - 'The Grand Ole Duke of York'

### **Word of the Week**

w/c 4<sup>th</sup> February – 'pretending'

w/c 11<sup>th</sup> February – 'enthusiastic'

w/c 25<sup>th</sup> February – 'concentrating'

w/c 4<sup>th</sup> March – 'estimate'

### **Sound of the Week**

w/c 4<sup>th</sup> February it will be the letter 'b'.

w/c 11<sup>th</sup> February the letter 'j'.

w/c 19<sup>th</sup> February the letter 'v'.

w/c 25<sup>th</sup> February the letter 'y'.

w/c 4<sup>th</sup> March the letter 'p'.

## **Veg Power Campaign**

80% of our children are not eating enough veg and **Veg Power** is on a mission to change this.

Veg Power is an initiative launched by the Food Federation with the help of experts and advisors lead by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Jamie Oliver, Dr Rangan Chatterjee and advertising legend Sir John Hegarty. They intend to use the power of communications to **inspire children to eat more veg, and to support parents trying to get more veg into their children's diet.**

We know a good diet in childhood can protect our kids from ill health in later life. A healthy diet with enough vegetables can also help their physical and academic development, giving them a happier and healthier childhood.

Veg Power have already produced a Truly Epic book of Veg Power! The book contains fun activities for children, veg facts, tips and child friendly veg-centered recipes ranging from snacks and sides to breakfasts and even desserts, from over 50 expert contributors.

Check out <https://vegpower.org.uk/> and <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/vegpower> for more information on the initiative and recipe book, and for information on how you can support it.

Both weblinks can be found on our parent app, under useful links.

## **Storytime – Ten Top Tips for parents**

### **1. Snuggle up together**

Make it cosy! Make sure your little one can see the book the right way up, and that they can see you too. They will learn so much from your face as you read.

### **2. Chat about the book**

Explore the pictures together and talk about anything you can see - animals, colours, patterns, places. Make links to familiar things: "There's a slide like the one in our park."

### **3. Make lots of noises**

Make animal noises, weather noises, traffic noises. Watch out for anything in the story which makes a sound.

### **4. Use your voice!**

Make stories exciting by changing the way you speak. Give a giant a deep, loud voice, and a mouse a tiny, squeaky one.

## **5. Move about**

Make stories for babies and young children active. Copy the movements in a book - bounce when the horse gallops or wiggle like a caterpillar in the garden.

## **6. Get your little ones to help**

Children love to join in. Get them making sounds and doing actions with you, and, as they get older, encourage them to remember some of the words or rhymes.

## **7. Sing at story time**

Sing a song you already know which fits in with something in the pictures or story. Or use a tune you know well and make up your own songs about something in the story.

## **8. Play with the books**

Go on a bear hunt in the park or munch like The Very Hungry Caterpillar at tea time!

## **9. Keep talking**

Tell them how much you love the book and they will love it too! Ask your child what they liked best in the story and tell them about your favourite bits.

## **10. Take books everywhere**

Put them into toy boxes and always keep some in your bag for emergencies.

## **Meningitis and Sepsis**

Meningitis and sepsis are not common but are very serious.

**Meningitis** is a swelling around the brain. It is a very serious, contagious illness, but if it is treated early most children make a full recovery.

**Sepsis** is a life threatening condition triggered by an infection. The skin may also develop pinprick bruises or large purple areas, which do not change colour if you roll a glass tumbler over them. This is a common sign of meningococcal septicaemia, a type of blood poisoning caused by the meningococcus bacteria, which can also cause meningitis.

**You should always treat any case of suspected meningitis or septicaemia as an emergency.**

Early signs may be like having a cold or flu. Children with meningitis can become seriously ill very fast, so make sure you can spot the signs. Your child may have a cluster of red or purple spots. Do the glass test. This rash can be harder to see on darker skin, so check for spots over your baby or child's whole body as it can start anywhere (check lightest areas first). **However, the rash is not always present - be aware of all the signs/symptoms.**

**The presence of fever and any other of the above symptoms should be taken extremely seriously. Not all children will show all the signs listed.**

If any of the signs below are present contact a doctor.



Fever, cold hands and feet



Floppy and unresponsive



Drowsy and difficult to wake



Spots/rash.  
A late sign - Do the glass test



Rapid breathing or grunting



Fretful, dislikes being handled



Unusual cry or moaning

'Meningitis Now' have a free app available to download from their website which features

- A full list of the signs and symptoms of meningitis and septicaemia
- Information on the after-effects of the disease
- Details of all their free services



- Links to find your nearest A&E or GP in an emergency

Please either follow the weblink below or find 'Meningitis Now' on our parent app under 'useful links'

<https://www.meningitisnow.org/meningitis-explained/signs-and-symptoms/download-our-mobile-app/>

### **Nursery Policies and Procedures**

Parents please make yourself familiar with our policies and procedures which you are able to view from our website and through our Parent app. In particular, our safeguarding, late collection and non-collection of a child, lost child policies and procedures, and Complaints and Compliments. If you do not have access to the internet please request to view these policies at nursery or ask to be provided with copies. If you have any queries or would like to contribute your ideas regarding our policies and procedures, please feel free to speak to a member of staff.

The policy of the month is 'Safeguarding and Child Protection', please find attached a copy of this policy or view the policy through our nursery app.

**Below is an excerpt from our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy regarding children's attendance -**

#### **'Monitoring children's attendance**

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern. Parents should please inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be called into the nursery on the day, so the nursery management are able to account for a child's absence. Children's absences can also be reported through our Parent App. If a child has not arrived at nursery within one hour of their normal start time the parents will be called to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the further emergency contacts will be used to ensure all parties are safe.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safeguarded.

This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children but enables children's attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe.'

### **Fully Funded Training Courses available for parents**

Are you interested in gaining a government funded level 2 qualification? They are fully accredited courses by NFCE and CACHE. The funding is available for any person who is over the age of 19 and who has lived in the EU/UK for three or more years. They have 35 courses in total, including; Behaviour that Challenges, Business

Administration, English / Mathematics, Mental Health Awareness, Children and Young Peoples Mental Health, Nutrition and Health, Learning Disabilities, Understanding Autism, Dementia Care, Caring for Young Children and People, Health and Social Care Professions, and many more.

The full course list is available on our parent app, under 'Useful Documents' and is entitled 'Learning Curve Course List'.

We must have at least 6 parents wanting to complete one of the courses, in order to obtain the funding.

If you do wish to gain one of the qualifications, please speak to Mrs Brockliss before Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February.

Yours sincerely

Helen Brockliss

Nursery Manager