



Hartley Wintney

July 2017

Monkey Puzzle Nursery News

by Sarah Worthington

This Month our theme is...

Sports!

We will be exploring all sorts of different sports with the children and, of course, with Wimbledon taking place during the first two weeks of July we might try a bit of hand/eye/ball co-ordination!



What have we been learning this month?

In **Babies** (Hedgehogs), we have been following our farm animals theme, looking at and playing with our farm animals and practicing the noises they make. Our caterpillars turned into butterflies this month and we loved watching them change and releasing them in the garden. We have been doing lots of water play to cool us down during the hot weather, and have also been exploring ice blocks with toys

hidden inside, and trying to get them out with our hands and other tools.

In **Toddlers** (Squirrels), we created our own farmyard board with cotton wool sheep, a sponge painted horse, a collage cow, feather handprinted chickens and painted pigs! We have been reading our favourite farm animal books and talking about the sounds they make, playing a game to match the animal to their sound. We have also been exploring how a chick grows into a chicken using seeds, and pretend eggs and chickens. Using sensory play, we have been making our own nests out of hay and exploring textures.

We also needed to cool down during the hot weather, so we set up our own car wash, using soap and water with sponges to clean our cars in the garden – we all had lots of fun!

In **Pre-School** (Owls) we have also followed the farm animal theme and have been learning the names of baby animals as well as exploring our sensory farm in the tuff tray. We had the excitement of watching our caterpillars turn into butterflies and releasing them into the garden. The children loved watching them fly away and then writing stories about them.

As it was Father's Day, we had fun playing superheroes. We made superhero cakes and also superhero father's day cards for our daddies!

We have been talking about how to keep cool in the hot weather and having fun with ice – we explored what happens to ice when it is hot.

Finally, we have been doing lots of messy play – with wet and dry corn flour, sponge painting and animal printing - lots of fun!

Employee of the month!

Congratulations to Beth for being nominated this month's employee of the month. Beth has been working hard this month and helping all over the nursery. Beth is progressing extremely well in her childcare training and we have received some glowing reports from her assessor. Well done Beth!



Staff News

We are delighted that we have 3 new starters this month who are all looking forward to introducing themselves to you and meeting your children:

In Hedgehogs, Hollie joined us on Monday 3rd July. Hollie is Level 3 qualified in childcare and education and joins us after 2 years of being a stay-at-home mum with her son, Tyler. She will be working 3 days a week (normally Wednesday, Thursday and Friday) and is very excited to be coming back into the workforce!

In Squirrels, we will be welcoming Ellen. Ellen joins us on Monday 10th July. She is also Level 3 qualified. As a previous apprentice at Cherryvale nursery in Ash Vale, she comes to us with lots of hands-on nursery experience. Ellen will be with us 3.5 days per week. She has a passion for horses which we're sure she will be sharing with the toddlers!

Also in Squirrels, Carla, currently a full time mum of 4, is joining our team. She has been working as a care worker for the elderly and is joining us to move into caring for children and will be working towards her professional qualifications over the coming months.

Finally, we are very sad to inform you that we will be losing Laura (Hedgehogs Room Reader), who will be leaving us at some point towards the end of the summer as she is moving away from the area. Once we have a confirmed date, we will let you know. We are currently recruiting for a new room leader with the aim to have a handover period before Laura leaves.

Room Audits

You may recall from last month's newsletter that we were expecting ITERS and ECERS room audits to take place in June. Unfortunately, Hampshire County Council have deemed it appropriate to remove the additional support they were providing for us post our OFSTED rating in October. As a result, these audits were cancelled in early June. While it is fantastic that HCC

believes that we no longer need extra support, we did find these audits very useful in identifying improvements that we can make. Therefore, we are looking at training up a member of staff to be able to conduct these audits internally, enabling us to continuously strive to improve our environments for your children.

New 30hrs funding for pre-schoolers

From 1st September 2017, the government will be extending funding for eligible pre-school children from 15 to 30 hours.

To check your eligibility and to register – please follow this link: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

We have now decided on our new fee structure to reflect the change in funding. Cherry will be sending out an email to all relevant parents over the course of the next few days.

Please be aware that government funding only covers childcare and not all the additional extras we provide at Monkey Puzzle, such as meals, snacks, sun cream etc. so the new funding structure will reflect this.

Home Learning

Our suggestion this month ties into our theme of sports. Physical exercise supports the development of connections in the brain, which in turn helps develop language, social skills and problem solving, as well as developing gross motor skills.

So – how about setting up an obstacle course in your garden or your local park? You can use all sorts of things lying around the house, and the children will love creating the course with you and then racing you or their siblings through it!

Dates for your Diary

24th October – INSET DAY – NURSERY CLOSED (we want to give you as much notice as possible!)

Christmas Closure (yes we are now closer to next Christmas!): We will be closing at **1pm on Friday 22nd December** & reopening at **7.30am on Tuesday 2nd January**.

Next Parents Meeting

To provide you all with an opportunity to hear more about what we have been doing, ask questions and feedback verbally on things you'd like to see us doing differently / better, we've decided to hold another parents meeting.

The date will be on **Wednesday 9th August at 7.30pm** so please come along.