

## Newsletter - November 2004

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### 1. Dates for Your Diary

- 1<sup>st</sup> November - first day back  
19<sup>th</sup> November - Race Night  
8<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas fete  
10<sup>th</sup> December - last day of term and Christmas Party  
6<sup>th</sup> January - first day back  
1<sup>st</sup> February - parents' morning

### 2. New Member of Staff

Lucy Carr, having served on the committee for a couple of years, has now joined our staff. She has just started studying for an NVQ2 in childcare and we wish her luck with her course.

Congratulations go to Alke, Mark and Rebecca on the birth of Robin last term.

### 3. New Committee Members

Thank you to all those parents who came to the AGM. Sandra Greenaway, Nicki Watson and Lucy Carr retired from the committee. Sandra and Nicki have been on the committee for years (and still help with fundraising), whilst Lucy co-ordinated a huge fundraising effort of over £3,000 last year.

The remaining committee members were joined by Ben Harrison (the new health and safety officer), Veronique Maingot, Jost Wahlen and Sally Cook.

Details of the new committee, together with their contact details are displayed on the board.

### 4. Thank Yous

Some of you may have noticed are lovely new rugs. These were paid for by the **Windmill Sale**. We've sent them a thank you card, but what they would really like is a bit of help between 1pm and 3pm on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December (setting up for the sale the following day) or between 2.00pm and 4.30pm on the Friday. If anyone can help out, please telephone Barbara Penniall on 681449

A big thank you also goes to the Woodcote Rally which, despite the wet weather drastically reducing its takings, has kindly agreed to give us £400. Had we not marshalled in the rain, we would probably have got nothing at all, so a big thank you goes to all those parents who

wore their fluorescent jackets and did their bit. The money is going to be put towards a new laptop computer.

## **5. Race Night-19<sup>th</sup> November**

The night was a huge success, thanks largely to the efforts of Sarah Heath who did all the planning, shopping, hassling for raffle prizes and sold 90% of the 74 tickets. She was very ably assisted on the night by Matthew, Ben, Tracey, Martina, Michelle, Lucy and Cathy who seized the initiative and just got on with it. We're still counting the money, but it seems we've raised about £1,000, which will go towards the laptop.

## **6. Food Donations**

As some of you will have found out, we're trying out a new type of snack donations rota. Now, five different families will be asked to make a donation at the start of each week. If you do not have time to go to the shop, we'd be very grateful if you would donate £1.50 instead, so we can go out and buy something. So far it seems to be working well.

## **7. Animal Half Hour**

We're running out of animals! Once a month or so, on a Thursday morning, an animal visits pre-school. We've had crayfish, horses, trout, parrots, guinea pigs, badger cubs, tortoises ... The children enjoy it immensely, but the winter always proves tricky because animals hibernate and they have to be suitable for indoors. If anyone has a pet

which they would be willing to bring along, please speak to Sharron

## **8. Parents' Morning Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2004**

Last year we had a parents' afternoon, which proved a great success. It was an opportunity for parents to have an informal chat with their child's keyworker, without the usual hustle and bustle of a pre-school session. This year we've decided to hold it on a Tuesday morning, so that the parents of our hoards of Plus 4s can talk to Chris Bernard if they wish. We hope that as many parents as possible will come along. Please complete and return the tear off slip at the end of this newsletter.

## **9. Clarification of new school admission rules**

A couple of parents of three year olds initially told us that their child would be starting school in September aged 4. It seems that at least one mistakenly thought that they not only had to decide which school their child would be attending, but also to start their child at 'big school' in September. This is not the case.

You *may* start your child at big school at four if you wish. However, if, like the parents of our existing 4 year olds, you want to take advantage of our Plus 4 sessions (which contributed greatly to our excellent OfSTED reports), you may keep them at pre-school. A four year old may start school in September, at Christmas or at Easter. They do not

*have* to start school until the term *after* their fifth birthday.

The new arrangements can be confusing. Parents only want to do what is best for their child and what may suit one child may not suit another. Please speak to Sharron for further information or advice. The parents' morning on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb will be the ideal opportunity.

## **10. Outside Play Area for Woodcote Pre-school?**

In July all our parents were given a market research questionnaire. We would like to know how people hear about us, why they chose us, what they like and what they would like to change. So far only nine parents have responded. We'd like as many responses as possible - if you would like another form, please ask Sharron.

So far it seems that most people hear of us through word of mouth. The biggest attractions are our qualified staff and flexible extra sessions, closely followed by the separate Plus4 and Tiddler sessions and hot meals.

66% of parents did not think there was anything to improve, although ALL the remainder would like to see an outdoor play area. We are therefore approaching the Parish Council for permission to build a small play area. If permission is granted, we will start fundraising and applying for grants.

## **11. Christmas Parties etc**

The usual pre-school play is being replaced by a Christmas Fete on 8<sup>th</sup>

December. The children have been beavering away at various craft items and practising some festive songs. More details will follow separately.

On 10<sup>th</sup> December, the last day of term, we will be holding our Christmas party, complete with Father Christmas and Jester Giggles. Again, more details about times etc will follow separately.