**Newsletter No 5**

##### April 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back after the Easter holidays – hope you have all had a good break.

You may have noticed our garden is looking particularly good after the addition of the new astro-turf which the children are really enjoying. A big thank you to all those who worked so hard over the holiday to get this project completed.

**Term Dates**

Monday 6th May – Centre closed – Bank holiday

Friday 45th May – Centre closed – Staff Training Day

Monday 28th May – Friday 31st May – Half Term holiday

**International Day Lunch**

International Day Lunch takes place this year on **Saturday 18th May from 12.30-2.30pm.** This is a lovely event where we share food from all around the world and are entertained by international dancers. We are also having various stalls and children’s activities. Tickets are £5.00 per family and will go on sale shortly.

**School Photographer**

Our fantastic school photographer, Helen Alderton, is visiting again this year. She will be in South Room on 30th April, East Room on the 1st May, and West Room on the 2nd May. She is also visiting the Nest at appropriate times throughout that week. If you would like photos with siblings taken then please come at the start of the session and Helen can take them.

**Bear Hunt – Wednesday 15th May – Another lovely learning event to join in with your children.**

You will soon be receiving an invitation to join your child on a “Bear Hunt” in our garden. This learning event takes place on Wednesday 15 May at morning and afternoon Nursery and Nest drop off times: 8.45/9.00 and 12.45/1.00. All Nest parents and children are invited to take part, no matter what day you usually attend. It will take you approximately 15 minutes to half an hour to enjoy ‘The Bear Hunt’, event depending on the time you have available.

**Walk to School Week - Monday 20 - Thursday 24th May**

Walk to school week is coming up! Now that warmer weather is here we are really encouraging healthy alternatives to using a car. During Walk to School week, we will ask the children how they came to Homerton, and whether after this week we have persuaded you to walk or cycle! We hope so, any of the staff who can will be doing the same! Encouraging children to be physically active sets good patterns for life and helps with both fine and gross motor skills, as well as combatting obesity and helping with brain development.

This story is great for rhyming and rhythm skills which are so important for beginning to learn to read. It will be huge fun so come and join us!

**Early Writing**

Some children are becoming interested in mark making, some are writing their name and some letters in their name. If they show an interest do encourage them to write in lower case letters (e.g. Fred).

You can do this by:

* Modelling. Showing them how to write letters yourself
* Being positive e.g. “That’s great writing. I like the way you wrote ‘r’ (Try not to be negative. We would never say “Don’t write in capitals”)
* If they are writing all letters in capitals, saying things like “Do you want to see a clever way of writing an ‘e’?”

Only do all of this if your child is interested. If they are not, don’t worry! It’s still very early to be writing recognisable letters. If you’d like further advice do ask your class staff.

**The importance of Gross Motor Physical Development Skills in developing writing skills**

Now the weather is better it is a great opportunity to get outside and enjoy open spaces such as Wandlebury Country park, or the park next door to Homerton. Opportunities such as these provide children with the chance to really develop their physical strength and skills. There is a direct link between children having strong arm, and upper body, strength and then being able to have the control to hold and move a pen to start drawing and writing. Some suggestions for developing arm and upper body strength are to climb trees, go on climbing frames, or monkey bars, or do wheelbarrow races…I am sure you will think of many more ideas.

Rough and tumble play, which children naturally love to do, is also very valuable in providing physical contact whilst also enabling children to learn about safe boundaries.

**Early Maths**

Maths on the Back Pack Loans for nursery children.

These packs have been made by staff and each has a Mathematical theme. Children will have an opportunity to play with a pack at home. They will be coming home across this term.

**May I remind you that school is closed Friday 25 May which is a training day**

Half term is the following week and we re-open on Monday 3 June. Please see below for information on Holiday Club during Half Term week.

**Half Term Holiday Club – Tuesday 28 May – Friday 31 May**

Would you like a place for your child in our Holiday Club? They have plenty of fun and enjoy seeing their friends. If you would like a place don’t delay! Please fill in and return a form obtainable from the office.

**Important dates for after the Half Term are :-**

**Wednesday 12th June – Really Wheelie Trail** at 9.00 -10.30 and 1.00-2.30 – We will be looking for parent volunteers to help with this event.

**Wednesday 26th June – Nursery Trips to Wandlebury Country Park** – parent volunteers needed – please talk to class staff.

**Friday 28th June – Nest Trip to Wandlebury Country Park** – parent volunteers needed – please talk to class staff.

Enjoy the sunshine

Best wishes



Alex Pearson

Head of Centre