**SPRING HALF TERM NEWSLETTER**

** ….This half term**

We have had a really interesting topic to explore called ‘healthy living’. The children have been learning about the important things they must do to keep themselves healthy. We have explored healthy and unhealthy foods through games, crafts, cooking, sorting activities and stories. All of the children have been taught the correct way to brush their teeth with videos, practical activities where they brushed dentures, baby doll’s teeth and teeth cleaning artwork. We reiterated the way we need to wash our hands to rid them of dirt and germs, which they are all very good at now! We extended this to practise face washing too! Many of our circle time activities have revolved around exploring different forms of exercise and observing the affect this has on our bodies. The children enjoyed feeling their heartbeats and recognised that it got faster as they worked harder and the blood was pumping faster. We introduced the children to mindfulness activities to calm and soothe our bodies and minds after all that hard work! They have enjoyed yoga, meditation and mindful breathing activities.

 **.…****Next half term**

Our topic after half term will be ‘Space’. We will be learning the planets, stars, sun and moon through a variety of fun activities. We will be changing an area of our playroom into a space station! The children can have fun with their imaginations taking on the role of astronauts, scientists and even aliens after making their very own passport to space! We will make rockets, planets and the sun, moon and stars in our craft activities. There will be some exciting science experiments going on too!

**Family photos**

At Pre-School we have a ‘Pre-School Family Album’ which has a page for each child to add pictures of their families. This is great for us to get to know them, for settling them and for engaging them in conversation. It would be great for more children to get the opportunity to add to the album so, if you haven’t already, please either send in some printed photos of your child, their family, close friends and pets or email some to us at hello@newdigatepreschool.co.uk and we will print them off.

**** **Appropriate clothing**

As always, we would prefer that your children come into pre-school in uniform. This is an important step in preparation for school but it also helps them to feel like part of their own little community which is fantastic for their self-esteem and confidence. Most importantly, now that the weather is colder and wetter, is that children are coming into pre-school with a waterproof and warm coat and on particularly cold days a hat and gloves. We spend a lot of time outdoors and must keep doors and windows open for ventilation and no one wants to spend the whole day feeling chilly!

******Spring term progress reviews**

The teachers are busy working on the children’s termly progress reviews. These should be with you, on the Famly app, straight after half term. Please read them and send a message to your child’s key person with any questions. There will be no parent’s meeting following these progress reviews unless there is anything urgent to discuss. The next parent’s meetings will be following the Summer term progress reviews.

 **World Book Day – Thursday 3rd March**

Children and staff can dress up as any book character for a fun day full of literacy activities on Thursday 3rd March. This year, we will be having a sponsored dressing up day in aid of the fantastic charity ‘Crackerjacks Children’s Trust’. They help support families with children who are differently able to access the same choices, opportunities and experiences as all other children. This ranges from providing specialist equipment, support and transport to get out and about in their local communities and offering respite care in their respite home. A letter to explain more about what they do will be coming home in bookbags this week. This also has a bit to sign if you wish to donate and fill in if you are working and they can collect gift aid on the donation. Suggested donations for the day are £2. Please bring this in on the day with the letter.

**** **Breakfast club**

Miss Stanford and Miss Johnson run the breakfast club everyday from 8am to 9am. It costs £5 per day and is for our 3- and 4-year olds. Bookings must be made for each half term in advance. In order to request a space, parents will need to message the manager (Joanne Johnson) on the Famly app, requesting the days you require, and she will reply to confirm whether there is a space available for your child. Due to the required adult to child ratios, places are limited.

** After School Club**

We are now running a pre-school after school club. This is run by Miss Stanford and Miss Johnson in the pre-school building and there will be the option of 3pm to 4pm @ £5 per child and 3pm to 5pm @ £12 per child and this will include a light tea. To book your child in for any after school club sessions from after February half term please send Jo a message and she can book this in. Please do this before Friday 11th February so we can ensure a space is available. Currently we are running the club on Mondays and Wednesdays, as there is most demand, but we can run on other days if requested by enough families.

** Unwell children**

At this time of year, it is important for us to remind you of our policy on unwell children attending pre-school. If your child is well enough to play and be active without the need for medication then we would usually say that they are well enough to attend pre-school. Children should NOT attend pre-school if they have a temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or above and should isolate and arrange a PCR test as this is a symptom of COVID-19. Children should NEVER come into pre-school if they are being given calpol etc to relieve the symptoms of any illness. These medications can mask a temperature and whilst the child attends pre-school they could be spreading an illness/infection to others or they can become very poorly very quickly as the medication wears off. They must stay at home until their temperature is below 37.8 degrees Celsius WITHOUT being given any medication. A continuous cough is also a symptom of COVID-19 and children should isolate and arrange a PCR test if they have this type of cough. Vomiting and diarrhoea occurrences require children to stay away from the setting until at least 48 hours from the last bout. Any new rashes or spots need to be diagnosed by a doctor/pharmacist before attending pre-school. It is always best to send us a message to discuss your child’s symptoms before sending them in if you are ever in doubt that they are well enough to attend.

 **Pre-School books**

If your child has read the book they took home, please can you encourage them to put it into the book box outside before they come in. This way we can be sure that it has been read and they need to choose a new one. It is also a great little step to becoming more independent and thinking for themselves.

**** **Pre-School fees and lunches**

A reminder that invoices are sent out half-termly. Fees will need to be paid in full by the end of each half term to ensure that your child retains their place for the next half term. From January 2022, hot lunches provided by Twelve15 and made by the school cook are increasing in price to £2.45 per meal. If your child is turning 3 years old before 31st March 2022 they will be eligible for their universal 15 hours of funding from April 2022. Some families may be eligible for the extended 30 hours entitlement if they meet certain criteria. Please take a look here to find out more and apply (please pay close attention to the deadline dates for applications): <https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare>

**ALL FEES MUST BE PAID IN FULL BY 3PM ON THURSDAY 10TH FEBRUARY TO RETAIN YOUR CHILD’S PLACE.**

**** **Nappies**

As we have such a large number of children in nappies currently, it is quite a considerable expense for the Pre-School to cover. It would be much appreciated if those families with children in nappies could contribute a pack of nappies and wipes as and when you are able to. The sizes we use are 4, 5, 6 and 7. This will mean that we can spend any remaining funds we have on resources for the children.

** Pre-Loved toys, books and dressing up**

If you happen to be having a clear out over the Christmas holidays and have any good quality toys, books and dressing up clothes then please send us a message to see if we can make use of it as we always in need of new resources. Thank you!

**Key dates for your diary**

 **\*\*\*PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AS THEY ARE NOT THE SAME DATES AS THE INFANT SCHOOL (this is due to Surrey County Council funding dates)\*\*\***

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| **End of half term** | Friday 11th February 2022 @ 3pm |
| **Half term**  | Monday 14th February to Friday 18th February |
| **Back to Pre-School** | Monday 21st February @ 9am |
| **Progress reviews sent on Famly app** | Monday 21st February  |
| **World Book Day** | Thursday 3rd March  |
| **End of term** | Friday 1st April @ 3pm |
| **Back to Pre-School**  | Tuesday 19th April @ 9am |
| **Half term**  | Monday 30th May to Friday 3rd June |
| **Back to Pre-School** | Monday 6th June @ 9am |
| **End of term**  | Friday 22nd July @ 3pm |