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www.rascalsplaygroup.co.uk

Newsletter – Spring Term 2024

Welcome to the Spring Term at Rascals and a warm welcome to all our new little Rascals! This is the second of three newsletters that will be issued during this academic year. The first newsletter and a copy of this one can be found on our website www.rascalsplaygroup.co.uk.

A newsletter will be issued at the beginning of each term containing lots of useful information. However, we will be posting updates, together with copies of letters that are sent home and newsletters on our website. Our website is also updated regularly with important dates and events. We also post regular reminders and useful information on our facebook page www.facebook.com/RascalsPreSchoolPlaygroup

And our closed Facebook group so please feel free to LIKE us and JOIN for regular updates and information in your newsfeed. This should enable you to have access to all the information you need when you need it.

Staffing:

Tracey - Manager & Treasurer
Claire - Supervisor (Senco/ Inco)
Hayley - Supervisor (Senco/ Inco)
Sian - Senior Assistant
Alana - Senior Assistant

Hannah -Trainee Assistant
Charli - Bank Staff
Lauren - Bank Staff
Melanie - Bank staff
Julie and Collette - Volunteers

Term Dates:

Spring Term 2024

Term begins:
Tuesday 2nd January 2024
Term ends:
Thursday 28th March 2024

Half Term Week:

12th February – 16th February 2024

Summer Term 2024

Term begins:
Monday 15th April 2024
Term ends:
Friday 12th July 2024

Half Term Week:

27th May – 31st May 2024

Bank Holiday: Monday 6th May

Rascals may have to close on occasional days through the year. We will always give you as much notice as possible of such closures.

Events for the Spring Term

Pancake Day- As Shrove Tuesday falls within the February half term this year we will be celebrating the day with the children on **Tuesday 20th February** once they return to rascals. We will offer the children pancakes with their snack and will discuss with specific parents/carers before this date regarding dietary requirements.

Chinese New Year: We will be celebrating Chinese New Year the week commencing **5th February** and will be offering the children prawn crackers to try at snack time. All foods will be discussed with parents/carers of children with specific dietary requirements before this date.

World Book Day: We will be celebrating World Book Day on **Thursday 7th March** and we would love the children to come dressed up as their favourite book character or bring in their favourite book to share with their friends. If your child does not attend on a Thursday but they wish to take part, then please feel free to allow them to dress up and bring a book any day during this week.

Red Nose Day: We will be joining in with Red Nose Day on **Friday 15th March**, more details will be given after half term.

Easter: Is in the second half of the term. We will be celebrating Easter with the children and more details will be given after the half term holiday.

Stay and Play - We will be holding more stay and play sessions this term. The first one will be on **Tuesday 16th January** at **9.30am - 10.15am**, the second one will be **Thursday 7th March 9.30am – 10.15am** and the final stay and play session of the academic year will be on **Friday 3rd May 9.30 - 10.15**. We politely ask that you ensure a member of staff lets you out of the setting at the end of these sessions so that we are able to ensure the safety of all the children in our care and keep record of who is entering and leaving the building. Thank you for your support with this.

Parent's evening - We are planning on holding our next parents evening on **Wednesday 28th February** beginning at 5.15pm. Your key person will be in touch with you nearer the time to arrange an appointment. If you cannot make this date, please contact a member of staff and we will arrange an alternative time for you to meet with your child's key worker.

Outside:

We will continue to spend time in the garden this term. Please make sure that your child is dressed for this cold weather whether they go outside or not. The hall can stay quite chilly in this weather, so children do need vests or t-shirts underneath their clothes. It is better to have several layers of clothes that can be removed should they get warm rather than children feeling cold.

School Transitions

Thank you to all the families who will be leaving us in July for confirming you have now applied for your child's school place. Once places are confirmed in April, we will be in contact with the schools and for those children who may need a little more support with the transition we will make the necessary arrangements. Some schools still send staff in to visit us whereas others don't but we will let you know of any Teacher visits prior to them happening so you can talk to your child about it.

Clear labelling of children's personal items:

Could we please offer an important reminder to name your child's items. This is particularly important with regards to water bottles and lunches but is also extremely helpful with regards to bags and coats too. It can be very time consuming for staff when items are not named and we really appreciate your support with this.

Procedures for severe weather closures:

We have only ever closed Rascals for bad weather once or twice so it is unlikely we will need to do so but if the decision is taken to close Rascals due to bad weather, we will issue an email and post a notice on our Facebook page advising you of this. If you haven't seen any messages from us advising you that Rascals is closed by 8am, this means that Rascals is open. If we do take the decision to close, as well as advising you, we will call the dedicated number at West Sussex County Council in order that our playgroup will be added to the list of school closures on their website. We do not take the decision to close lightly and will remain open if we possibly can, but we do need to take into account the safety of everyone arriving and departing.

Rascals Facebook group

Please ensure that you have joined our Rascals private Facebook group by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/146062360093618>

This is a private page and can only be used by current parents/carers of children attending Rascals during this academic year. It is a great way to communicate with other families and may help you all to become more familiar with each other as we realise this can be difficult when dropping off and collecting children

Please bear in mind that this group is intended to be used for the purpose mentioned above and we would ask that any issues, concerns or worries you have about Rascals are not discussed within this group but be brought directly to us as usual so that we can address any such issues immediately.

You can also visit our general Rascals Facebook page which is available for everyone to follow. This can be found by following this link: <https://www.facebook.com/RascalsPreSchoolPlaygroup>

In addition to this newsletter, you will find attached a Termly Reminders sheet which we hope you will find useful. We realise this is a lot of information to take in all at once but feel it is useful to provide you with as much detail as possible and hopefully this will answer some of the questions you may have. However, if there is anything you are unsure of or if you just need a bit of advice about something, please do speak to a member of staff who will be more than happy to help you.

We look forward to enjoying the Spring Term with you all.

THANK YOU.

THE RASCALS TEAM

Rascals mobile: 07546584314

[PLEASE NOTE: The Rascals mobile phone and email address are constantly monitored by Tracey. During out of hours and particularly over weekends and holidays you may not receive an immediate response. However, if you are contacting us with a matter of urgency an email is always the best form of communication].

TERMLY REMINDERS

Personal Details:

- Please ensure you inform us immediately of any change of details such as mobile phone numbers or other contact details for parents and your emergency contacts. It is essential that our records are kept up to date in case of emergencies.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO TELL A MEMBER OF STAFF IF SOMEONE DIFFERENT IS COLLECTING YOUR CHILD FROM PLAYGROUP. WE WILL NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO GO WITH ANYONE UNLESS WE HAVE YOUR PRIOR PERMISSION AND DETAILS ABOUT THAT PERSON. THIS APPLIES IN ALL CASES. WE WILL ALSO NOW BE OPERATING A PASSWORD SYSTEM FOR ANYONE WHO HAS NOT COLLECTED PREVIOUSLY SO PLEASE BE PREPARED TO THINK OF A SPECIAL WORD THAT YOU CAN SHARE WITH US AND YOUR ELECTED PERSON.

Change Bags:

- Please ensure that your child's bag is NAMED CLEARLY on the outside as some children do have similar bags and it is difficult for them to tell us which is theirs.
- Please always check your child's bag when you get home as used nappies or soiled clothes will be placed in there during the morning if necessary. Unfortunately, we do not have facilities to dispose of soiled nappies on the premises and therefore these will be placed into a nappy sack and put into your child's bag.

Clothing:

- Please make sure your child wears suitable clothing for the weather each day.
- It is important to send your child to playgroup with more than one set of spare clothes as they will most definitely get dirty at some point!
- Please ensure that you don't send them to playgroup in their best clothes or coat as the children need to feel free to explore and play.
- **PLEASE make sure you write your child's name clearly and visibly on all their belongings to avoid any confusion. This includes their hats, gloves, scarf, shoes, water bottles, lunchbox and bags.**

Health and Safety:

- For safety reasons we prefer jewellery is not worn at playgroup. We do understand that the jewellery may be of cultural or religious significance and we are happy to make an exception for this. However, this will be at your own risk; as we are unable to take any responsibility for injury, damage or breakages. We would also ask that if your child has their ears pierced, please could you ensure they wear plain studs for playgroup.

Food Allergies/Safety:

- We are a nut free zone, please could you all keep this in mind when you prepare your child's lunch.
- Some parents like to send sweets into playgroup when it is their child's birthday, however, we are a nut free zone and have other dietary requirements so please speak to a member of staff so that we are able to help to ensure all children can be included.
- Please also ensure that no food is left in your child's bag. If you need to bring them a packed lunch to have after playgroup please pass it to a member of staff who will keep it safe.
- Please also ensure you chop any food such as grapes, large blueberries, olives etc length ways or ideally quarters before putting them in your child's lunch. Also items such as sausage, cheese, cucumber, carrots should be cut into long thin strips rather than chunks.

Medicines in Playgroup:

Please be advised that any medical products needed at playgroup, **MUST** be given to a member of staff for us to store in our medical box in the Main Hall and paperwork will need to be completed.

Please could all parents check **NO** medical products are left in their child's rucksack on their peg during the course of the morning, as all the children do have free access to their pegs.

Illness:

Please **DO NOT** send your child to playgroup if they are unwell. You will be asked to take them home again. We also ask you to inform us if your child has taken any medication in the morning before arriving as we need to make a note of it for emergency purposes.

If they have suffered from diarrhoea or sickness please keep them at home for at least 48 hours after the last episode of sickness or diarrhoea. This also applies to those children who have started a course of antibiotics.

Policies and Procedures:

Please ask a member of staff if there are any particular policies you would like to see so these can be forwarded to you electronically.

Car Parking and Children's safety:

Please remember not to use the front church car park unless it has been agreed with a staff member. Please use the car park on the far side of the church.

Please be aware of small and young children running around in both car parks.

Please ensure your child is fully supervised when waiting to come into playgroup in the morning and please ensure older children are supervised on a Monday and Tuesday afternoon. We have had experiences in the past where broken glass or other unsavoury litter has been found discarded on the church grounds and would not like any of the children to injure themselves.

Rascals occupancy list:

If you have a younger child or you know of someone who would like to put their child on our occupancy list to attend Rascals, please speak to Tracey. We have a list for the next few years so it is important to register children as soon as possible.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- **Stay and Play- Tuesday 16th January 9.30-10.15**
- **Chinese New Year - Week commencing 5th February**
- **Half term - Monday 12th - Friday 16th February**
- **Parent's Evening- Wednesday 28th February**
- **World Book Day - Thursday 7th March AND**
- **Stay and Play- Thursday 7th March 9.30-10.15**
- **Red Nose Day - Friday 15th March**
- **Last Day of Term - Thursday 28th March**
- **First Day of Summer Term - Monday 15th April**