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## **Interim Newsletter – Summer Term 2023**

Welcome back to the second half of the Summer term at Rascals.

This is the final newsletter issued during this academic year. The previous newsletters and a copy of this one can be found on our website [www.rascalsplaygroup.co.uk](http://www.rascalsplaygroup.co.uk).

We update our website regularly with important information and useful dates so please do check regularly. We also post reminders and useful information on our facebook page [www.facebook.com/RascalsPreSchoolPlaygroup](https://www.facebook.com/RascalsPreSchoolPlaygroup) so please feel free to LIKE us 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 and Safeguarding lead  
Claire - Supervisor and Special Educational Needs Coordinator  
Sian - Senior Assistant  
Alana - Senior Assistant

Bank Staff – Melanie, Charli, Lauren, Hayley

**Volunteers:** Julie, Collette and Hannah

### **Term Dates:**

#### **Autumn Term 2023**

**Term begins Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September**

**Term ends Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December**

**Half term week 23<sup>rd</sup> October – 27<sup>th</sup> October**

#### **Spring Term 2024**

**Term begins Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

**Term ends Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March**

**Half term week 12<sup>th</sup> Feb – 16<sup>th</sup> Feb**

#### **Summer Term 2024**

**Term begins Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April**

**Term ends Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July**

**Half term week 27<sup>th</sup> May – 31<sup>st</sup> May**

### **Staff changes**

As you will see from the above staff information we have had a few changes. Sadly Sam is no longer with us at Rascals but is keeping in touch with us regularly and is doing well. Sian is now a Senior Assistant rather than the Deputy Manager and we are delighted to announce that Hayley will be returning to Rascals in November as a Supervisor. Hayley went on maternity leave in 2021 and has since then been a member of our bank team. However, her little baby is now nearly two and so they will both be joining us again in November.

### **Photographer**

We have the photographer booked for Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June. She will take photos of the children during the morning but if your child doesn't attend on a Monday and you would like them to be included, please come along at 9.30am and we will ask her to photograph your child first so you can leave promptly again.

### **Forest School**

We are extremely excited to have booked a visit for our oldest children to the forest school at Summerlea school on

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June.** Unfortunately, we cannot extend this visit to our younger children but we hope to repeat it next year and they will then have their chance to attend. Further information will be sent out next week to those families involved. Please ensure you sign and return your permission slip so we know your child will be attending.

### **Last day of term**

Our last day of term will be Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July when we will be saying goodbye to all of the children leaving us to start school.

All children are invited to come along for this session, whether they usually attend or not but we appreciate it may be a little overwhelming for some of the younger children as it will be very busy. Under the circumstances if you would prefer to keep your younger child at home that day, please do let us know.

We would ask that any of the younger children who do attend that session, be collected at the earlier time of 11.45am please. You are then very welcome to join us in the church if you would like to.

For parents/carers of the older children, please come along to the church at 11.50am for your child's last performance on the stage!

After the short service, we will take the children back to collect their belongings and then let them out to you as normal. However, we would ask that you don't leave straight away as we will be handing out some things to the children and you will have the opportunity to take some photos and say your goodbyes to friends and staff etc.

### **Sun Cream**

We are looking forward to spending as much time as possible outside this term and we are hoping the weather will continue to stay warm. The children have free access to the garden at all times and in the mornings it can be very sunny and in the afternoons, it can become chilly as the sun moves around and we are more shaded. Therefore, could we ask that you continue to send your child with a jumper or cardigan and a sun hat please.

We would also ask that you apply sun cream to your child before they come in please as we simply don't have time to do this as I'm sure you can imagine! It is helpful if you can give us some lotion that we can keep at Rascals so that we can reapply it if they have played with water. We appreciate your help with this.

### **Reading books**

We will continue to send reading books home for our older children over the next few weeks but will start to collect them all in during the week beginning 26<sup>th</sup> June so that we can stock take ready for next year.

### **Spare clothes**

Could we please remind **all** parents/carers to bring spare clothes for your child. We do get very messy and wet at Rascals and will need to change the children at various times. It is also great practise for the children in preparation for school to get their own bag and to change their clothes.

### **School Readiness**

As we prepare to say a sad farewell to our older children we thought it would be beneficial to reflect on how at Rascals we help to prepare the children for school and how you too can help them at home.

At Rascals we promote your child's independence from the moment they start with us. Within our supportive environment, your child is encouraged to think and act for themselves.

**Toilet independence:** Once your child is fully toilet trained they are encouraged to use the toilet and maintain their personal hygiene independently.

**Personal Belongings:** Your child is encouraged to look after their own belongings. They are encouraged to hang up their own coat and bag and to collect them at the end of the morning.

**Getting Dressed:** Your child is encouraged to dress themselves. Taking off and putting on their own coat and shoes and will practice this through various dressing up and role play opportunities. (Please try and purchase shoes for your child that they can manage themselves).

**Free flow:** Your child is encouraged to explore their own interests and are given the opportunity to access a variety of resources to support their learning.

**1 to 1 Reading sessions:** In the academic year before your child starts school, they will have regular 1 to 1 reading sessions with their key person. They will have the opportunity to take the books home for the week to share with parents / carers.

**School Role Play:** We have a school role play area at Rascals throughout the year. This is more frequently set up during the summer term so the children become more familiar with the school uniforms that they will be encountering in their new schools.

**Lunch Time:** Those children who stay for full day sessions (Mondays and Tuesdays) have the opportunity to eat lunch together twice a week and this is an opportunity for the children to practice eating their lunch independently in a social situation.

**Liaise with local schools:** We maintain close links with local schools and annually review transition arrangements.

**Teacher meetings and visits:** We have already attended a transition event where we were able to discuss each of our older children with their new school. This gave us the opportunity to discuss any concerns we may have about how they may settle at school. We will also be welcoming any schools into the setting who wish to visit.

### **Top Tips for Starting School:**

- Involve your child in the process of buying uniform and other necessities for school.
- Encourage your child to dress and put on their shoes and coats independently (make sure the shoes are child friendly ie Velcro)
- Encourage your child to manage their own personal hygiene after using the toilet such as teaching your child to wipe their own bottom and hand washing.
- Talk about starting school together BUT don't refer to it as starting 'BIG' school as this can prove intimidating. Instead use the schools name or refer to it by the colour of its uniform.
- Read books about starting school together

The following web links provide information and advice on developing the key skills your child needs to be school ready.

### **Pacey – Steps to Starting School Poster**

<https://www.pacey.org.uk/Pacey/media/Website-files/PACEY%20general/Steps-to-starting-school.pdf>

### **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 let Tracey know. We have a list for the next few years so it is important to register children as soon as possible.

We look forward to enjoying the rest of the Summer Term with you all.

**THANK YOU.**

**THE RASCALS TEAM**

Rascals mobile: 07546584314

Rascals email: [rascalsplaygroup@gmail.com](mailto:rascalsplaygroup@gmail.com)

**[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.
- If the weather is warm and sunny please ensure you apply sun cream to your child before you bring them to playgroup as it does get very hot in the garden.
- PLEASE make sure you write your child's name clearly and visibly on all their belongings to avoid any confusion. Some children do enjoy taking their shoes and socks off whilst playing indoors so it would be helpful if you could clearly name their shoes.

### **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 all parents refrain from putting nuts in your child's lunch, thank you.
- Some parents like to send sweets into playgroup when it is their child's birthday, however, please note we have to be a nut free zone and cater to all of the children's 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 at all. You will be asked to take them home again. We also ask you **NOT** to bring your child to Rascals if they have taken any medication in the morning. 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 use the car park on the far side of the church at all times. Some families may be given permission to park in the staff car park where they need assistance.

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. 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.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

**Forest School - Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June**

**Summer and Leavers Celebration - Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July (Last day)**