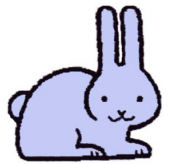




Newsletter March 2018



Snow day

Following our unexpected snow day on Friday we are hopeful that we have now seen an end of the nasty winter weather. Should we have snow again we have to follow Featherstone Wood Schools lead, if they are shut we are forced to shut to. We alert parents as soon as we can through our Facebook page.

Easter bonnet competition

This year we will be holding an Easter Bonnet competition again. During the week of Monday 19th March through to Wednesday 28th March we invite you all to come to school in homemade Easter Bonnets. We will take photos of all the bonnets, modelled by our staff, and the pictures will all be put on our Facebook page for the Easter holidays. There will be 2 prizes, one for the boy and one for the girl who receives the most Facebook likes by the time that we return to preschool after the holidays.

Invoices

Please note that the last day of term is Wednesday 28th March not Thursday 29th March as suggested by this half terms invoices. Preschool closes at 12 noon. Invoices have been amended accordingly.

Dates for your diary

March 19th – 28th – Easter bonnet competition
Wednesday 28th March – break up for Easter, no lunch club
Monday 16th April – preschool reopens
Monday 7th May – Bank holiday, preschool shut
Thursday 24th May break up for half term
Monday 4th June preschool reopens
Wednesday 27th June – Teddy Bears Picnic
Thursday 5th July – no lunch club - new starters session
12.30 – 1.30
20th July summer term ends (TBC)

Fees – Just a reminder

At the end of last year we reviewed our likely running costs and income and due to the increase in the National Minimal Wage from April 2018 our fees will increase marginally to £4.40 per hour. This means that a morning session will be £13.20 and a 2 hour lunch club session will be £8.80. Just a reminder, all fees are due in advance at the start of each week, or, if you prefer they can be paid in advance monthly or half termly. Non payment may lead to your child's place being wholly or partially withdrawn. We will attempt to recover all unpaid debts and will take legal action in necessary.

There is funding available for children the term after they turn 2, this is dependent on your family circumstances and income. Please check <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/css/flexyears/freeearlyeduc/apply2yoldplace/> if you think that you might be eligible or speak to Rachel in confidence. All children are entitled to 15 hours free at preschool the term after they turn 3. Please note: we are unable to increase funded hours midterm.

30 hours funding

Those children who are entitled to the 30 hours free childcare can use up to 25 hours per week with us (spaces permitting).

You, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) the equivalent of working 16 hours a week at your national minimum wage (£120 at the National Living Wage, less if you are on the National Minimum Wage)

If you, or your partner, are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or you're unable to work because you are disabled or have caring responsibilities, you could still be eligible. You can't get 30 hours free childcare if you, or your partner, expect to earn £100,000 or more.

Your child can start in their childcare place the term after they turn 3 years old and have received a valid 30 hours code, **whichever is later**. Term start dates are 1st September, 1st January and 1st April.

You may get asked for further information as part of your application, **so apply well ahead of the start date for each term**.

To keep your 30 hours free childcare place you need to check your details are up to date every 3 months.

Preschool attendance

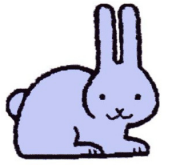
Here at Bunnies Pre-School we realise that regular attendance by children is very important in order that they may become confident with a regular and consistent schedule. Even for very young children, there are positive benefits to be gained from regular attendance, whatever the weekly pattern of childcare or schooling. This includes not only coming to every planned session, but also arriving on time.

Children who attend every planned session develop a feel for the rhythm of the week, gain a sense of security from some regular elements and find it easier to build and sustain a range of social relationships.

Please see our Non Attendance Policy below.



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Non attendance policy

- If you are planning holidays during term time you must let us know in advance so we can record this in our register.
- If your child is sick or cannot attend for some reason, you must call us before 9.15am that day to let us know.
- If we have not heard from you by 9.35am we will call you to establish why your child is absent.
- If we cannot make contact with a parent/carer we will use all the contact details and the emergency contacts you have given us to try to establish why your child is absent.
- If we are concerned about the welfare of a child we reserve the right to contact social services.
- Fees remain payable during periods of absence, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed
- We must notify Herts County Council where children in receipt of Early Years Free Entitlement fails to attend preschool regularly without good cause or reason.

Labels and changing bags

Please ensure that all items of clothing coming to preschool are clearly labelled with your child's name. We are always happy to change nappies etc at pre-school; however parents **MUST** provide all the necessary equipment in a clearly labelled bag. Please ensure that changing bags have adequate supplies in each day including wipes, nappy sacks and nappies. **Please also make sure that there are no creams, lotions or potions left in your child's changing bag. All of our children can access their changing bags throughout the session and such items can present a hazard to the children's health and safety.** If for any reason they need to come to school with your child please hand them to a member of staff in the morning for safe keeping. **Providing items that are missing from bags, especially wipes and nappy sacks has incurred a huge increase on our running costs; as a consequence of this a small charge is made for items that are regularly used from our stock.**

Nappies

We are running very low on nappies and pull ups, we always keep some in stock for emergencies but we are fast running out. Can you help? If you have recently potty trained have you got any unwanted nappies that you could donate to us please?

Parking

Please note that there is no allocated parking in the school grounds for children at Bunnies Preschool or Featherstone Wood School. We request that parents park cars either opposite the play centre on Featherston Road or at The

zxfHyde shops. If you walk to school and wish to leave a buggy for collection later please leave it by the brick wall alongside Bunnies.

Snack time

Each day at preschool we offer the children a choice of two or three different fruits or vegetables at snack time plus either milk or water to drink. In an effort to keep our fees down, parents are asked to contribute £5.00 per half term towards these costs.

Fee paying children will see this added onto their invoices at the start of each half term, and funded children will be asked to make voluntary contributions. Recently we have seen a big drop in the number of funded children who are making these voluntary payments. Please, if you can, do contribute to this, we can only continue to offer such good choices to the children with your help.

Home time

Could parents/carers please stand clear of our doorway and windows whilst waiting to collect children at home time as some of our children can find it distressing if they can see you waiting outside.

Head lice

We had a couple of cases of head lice reported to us towards the end of the summer term. Please check your child's hair regularly and carefully to stop this problem from recurring this term. We recommend using a nit comb on damp conditioned hair rather than using chemicals.

Sickness and diarrhoea

In line with advice from the NHS children should be kept off school for at least 48 hours after the last symptoms of sickness or diarrhoea have passed. The web page with lots of further advice can be accessed at:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Yourchildatschool/Pages/Illness.aspx>

Grapes

Current advice is for grapes to be cut in half *lengthways* to make them easier for children to eat and to reduce choking hazards. Please, if you are providing grapes in your child's lunch box, make sure that they are chopped to reduce hazards.