



Newsletter April 2018



Welcome

Welcome back all, we hope you had a lovely restful Easter break. This term we are trialling staying open until 3pm each day. We have a limited number of afternoon sessions available, please speak to Rachel or Anna ASAP if you would like to extend your child's lunch club sessions or add in afternoon sessions.

This term we are pleased to welcome Cherie Bacon back onto our staff team; Cherie has a long history in childcare, she worked previously at Bunnies Preschool (then known as Broadhall Bunnies Preschool) before embarking on a solo career as a childminder. Now that her grandchildren are older and are in the school system Cherie has decided that the time is right to come back to preschool. We are also delighted to welcome back Hannah from her maternity leave; she will be here with us on Fridays.

Afternoon sessions

This year during the summer term we have extended our opening hours to 3pm each day to enable children to access their 30 hours entitlement with us. We have a limited number of spaces left, please speak to Rachel or Anna for more information.

Easter bonnet competition

Thank you to all of you who took the time to make lovely Easter bonnets with your children and to vote for your favourites. We said that there would be a prize each for the highest voted girls and boys bonnets, but this year we have added in an additional boy's prize as 2 boys hats have been neck to neck with the voting. At the time of writing between them they have achieved 140 votes with only 2 votes separating them; an achievement we felt should be celebrated!

Congratulations go to Callum, Alfie and Isabelle and your adult helpers. Well done!

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.

Inset day

Please note that there will be an additional inset day this term on Monday 4th June. This is immediately after the half term holiday.

Staff training

We have 2 scheduled staff training sessions this term and to accommodate them we will have no afternoon sessions on Tuesday 1st May and Tuesday 19th June. As previously advised there will also be no afternoon session on Thursday 5th July due to our new starters session. We apologise for any inconvenience that this may cause.

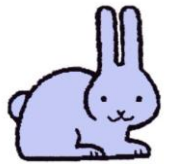
Focus child

Every term each child has a week when they are our 'Focus Child'. During this focus week we all observe the focus children while they play to find out more about their interests and how they are progressing. At the end of the week we invite you in for a parent consultation with your child's key person.

We value the knowledge and understanding that you have of your child as their first educators and it really helps us to know what your child likes doing at home, any achievements they have made and if you have anything that you would like to know about your child's development etc. Therefore, a week or so before your child's focus week we will send home a simple sheet for you to complete. We also welcome any photos that you would like to share with us that we can put into your child's learning journey book. These pictures can be prints or if you would prefer email them to shephall@bunniespreschool.co.uk Please note, please put your child's name in the subject bar of any



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emails that you send, attachments without a recognisable label will not be opened!

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.

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



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• 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 Hyde 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.

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>

Dates for your diary

Tuesday 1st May NO AFTERNOON SESSION;
staff training

Monday 7th May - Bank holiday, preschool shut

Thursday 24th May - break up for half term, 3pm

Friday 25th May - Inset day

Monday 4th June - Inset day

Tuesday 5th June - Preschool reopens

Tuesday 19th June - NO AFTERNOON SESSION;
staff training

Wednesday 27th June - Teddy Bears Picnic - More information to follow

Thursday 5th July - NO AFTERNOON SESSION -
new starters session 12.30 - 1.30

Thursday 19th July - Last 'normal' day; last day of
term for all children who are returning to us in
September

Friday 20th July - Leavers party, 9.30 - 11.30 (TBC)
by invitation only. More information to follow