

Southdown Methodist



Pre-School

November 2020

The Pre-School Team hope that you all had a relaxing half term and look forward to welcoming you back to pre-school next week.

Throughout the first half of term we constantly evaluated the impact and efficiency of our Covid policies and procedures. This process led to changes and “tweaks” to promote health and safety in the setting whilst also ensuring an engaging and motivating learning environment. Although these are not “normal times” we are striving to make the Pre-school experience as positive and “normal” as possible. We hope you are finding that the adjustments successfully achieve those goals.

...and, yes! There are a couple more changes to the morning routine to come. Later in the newsletter we give details of an area to hang coats and bags as well as the reintroduction of “show and tell.”

TOPICS FOR THE HALF TERM

We always encourage child initiated play and learning following the children’s ideas or interests. Therefore, this may (and often does!), take us away from the planned topics or activities.

This half term our main topics will be **Animals and Habitats**.

Week commencing	Topic	Colour of the week
2nd November	Dinosaur world	Orange
9th November	In the woods	Brown
16th November	Under the sea	Blue
23rd November	In the jungle	Green
30th November	Farm animals	Red
7th December	Cold places	Silver
14th December	Habitat homes	Gold

Each day we will offer a craft activity, generally linked to the topic of the week, but children are also encouraged to investigate the wide selection of resources available. Therefore, items made on the craft table will often vary and reflect the children's interests, preferences and exploration of the available resources.

Craft activities can get very messy! In "normal times" we have provided aprons for the children during craft activities but due to Corona-Virus we are not able to use our 'over-the-head' aprons. Therefore we cannot guarantee that items of clothing will remain clean. **Please encourage your child/children to wear clothing that is not too special and allows them freedom of movement.**

SHOW AND TELL ITEMS

We would now like to reintroduce 'Show and Tell' at the beginning of each morning session. We try to encourage a link to the topic or colour of the week for show and tell items. However if a particular item will help your child come to pre-school confidently then that is fine. **PLEASE label any items your child brings from home** and avoid bringing anything valuable or precious. **Please be aware that show and tell items will be stored in close proximity to each other throughout the session and returned to the children at home time.**

COFFEE MORNINGS - Week commencing 23rd November

In normal circumstances we would host a coffee morning once every half term. Coffee Mornings are an opportunity for you to meet other parents and carers over a tea or coffee whilst also having the opportunity to look at your child's Learning Journal. Unfortunately, due to social distancing restrictions, we are unable to host this event to you all on one single morning.

Instead we will host a number of coffee mornings during the week commencing 23rd November and the number of parents / carers attending will be limited to 6 per morning. We will be sending an email with more details closer to the date.

If you are not able to attend any of the dates please know that you are always welcome to ask your child's key-worker to see their Learning Journal at any other time.

LAST DAY OF TERM AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

Tuesday 15th December is our last day of term and we will be having a Christmas Party for all of the pre-school children. All pre-school children are invited to this party even if they do not normally attend on a Tuesday. This session will be during normal times of 09:10 - 12:10. There will be NO LUNCH CLUB on this day.

Pre-school will return on Thursday 7th January 2021.

NEWSPAPER DONATIONS

We are always very grateful for any donations of used newspapers (large and small).

COATS AND BAGS

We appreciate that taking your child's coat or bag away with you in the morning may not be convenient and might create difficulties if your child is being collected by someone different. Therefore, from next week, we will be providing hanging space at the top of the stairs of the main entrance. Please use this to hang your child's coat and any bags that do not contain items essential to your child's needs during the session. **Please ensure that any items or bags brought into the hall for the session are clearly labelled.** Unfortunately we can not be responsible for items left at the top of the stairs and all items are left at your own risk.

FOOTWEAR - WELLIES, CROCS AND SANDALS

If the weather is wet and your child is wearing wellies to pre-school please ensure that you bring a pair of shoes or plimsols for them to change into for the morning.

During warmer weather can we please ask that the children do not wear Crocs to pre-school and that sandals are well fitted. It is very clear to staff that the children are less safe on the climbing equipment and soft play when wearing Crocs or poorly fitting sandals.

SNOWY WEATHER

As the weather becomes colder we would like to remind you that in the event of snow we will endeavour to open the pre-school. Our decision to open or close is not linked to any of the local schools or nurseries. In the event of extreme weather conditions or exceptional circumstances the safety of the children, parents and staff will always come first. This may be at short notice. In such a rare event we will take steps to inform all parents/carers by text or email. We would also encourage you to refer to our website at www.southdownmethodistpreschool.com which will be updated regularly in these circumstances.

LIBRARY BOOKS

We continue to provide a selection of books available for you borrow and share with your child at home. All books that have been borrowed will be 'stood down' for a week or more before being returned into circulation. Please remember to mark in the 'Library Log' when you take and return a book. We hope you enjoy and make use of this resource.

HOMETIME PROCEDURE

Please remember to inform a member of staff and sign the 'Going Home Book' if someone we have not met before is picking up your child.

ABSENCE AND ILLNESS

Please notify us in advance, or on the day, if you child is going to be absent from one or more pre-school sessions. In the case of sickness please keep your child at home for 48 hours after their last

bout of illness. Sickness and diarrhoea can spread very quickly so we would appreciate everyone following these procedures.

Please also remind yourselves of our Covid-19 Policies and Procedures regarding illness. -

These were sent to you in the pre-school Welcome Pack and are also be available on the pre-school website.

PRE-EXISTING INJURIES FORM

Please be aware that as part of the pre-school's safeguarding obligations it has been recommended to us that we ask all parents / carers to inform us of any pre-existing injuries. If your child arrives at pre-school with an injury that has occurred outside of the setting we would be grateful if you could record this injury and how it occurred on a 'Pre-existing Injury Form' which are located in the reception area. We thank you in advance for your co-operation in this matter.

SNACK TIME

Every morning the children are provided with a healthy snack. If you would like to make a contribution towards the snack we would be very grateful. Please see and sign the 'Snack List' in reception. Thank you very much in advance for your contributions.

WEBSITE

Hopefully you will find the pre-school website a useful source of information. We will now begin to add to the 'News' section of the website on a weekly basis. This will be updated with reminders of specific dates in the pre-school calendar and photographs of the various activities the children have been taking part in. **During the week commencing 2nd November there will be a 'Specific Consent' form available in reception. Please sign this form indicating if you consent or decline permission for your child's photograph to appear on the website.**

You will also find a section of the website containing the 'Latest Newsletter' and a section containing information about the Early Years Foundation Stage; this section also contains links to lots of informative websites related to child development and activities or support available in your local community.

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding development of the website please let a member of staff know.

www.southdownmethodistpreschool.com

CONTACT WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

If you have an interest, hobby, skill or event of cultural significance that you could, and would like to, share with the pre-school children then please mention it to a member of staff. We welcome any input and hope to be able to open our doors to visitors in the not too distant future. Over the years we have regularly hosted parents, grand-parents and older siblings who were musicians, historians, artists, nurses, authors or firemen.

AND FINALLY:

We always try to make ourselves available to talk to you but this is not always possible first thing in the morning as settling the children is our main priority. If you need to tell us something urgently then we will always make time for you but otherwise it is more convenient for members of staff to talk at the end of the session when we have more time. If the subject is personal or requires confidentiality please let us know and we will make the pre-school office available for conversation.

If you have any concerns please share them with us. We are here to help and to make this a positive experience for everyone.

Many thanks

The Pre-School Team