



Group Newsletter – Summer 2016



Summer is here again and we have already seen some amazing weather! Whilst this brings its own challenges at nursery, it's certainly nice to see some sunshine. We hope that you are all well, and find these seasonal newsletters interesting – we always value your feedback.

CHARITY FUNDRAISING 'PATTERNS' Charity Week w/c 16th May 2016

Our annual charity event was another huge success this year and the children and our team obviously had a great time. Thank you to all of our team members who made a big effort in dressing up in lots of crazy patterns and planning lots of related activities. Everyone made it a really special week for the children. Thanks also to all of our parents who supported the event and helped the children get into the spirit of the week whilst raising money for such worthy causes.

The money has been coming in thick and fast and the final total now stands at an amazing **£6462.79!** Any last minute donations are welcome!

This year we plan to split the money raised between three charities which are all meaningful for us here at Mulberry Bush.

Firstly, '**The Good Life Orphanage**', who we have supported for many years as you know. Also **Blind Children UK**, one of our children at Whitefield recently experienced a terrible eye infection and was at risk of it affecting her sight. Thankfully she has recovered well and we wanted to recognise the fantastic work this charity does.

Thirdly, **Kicks Count**, a charity which aims to empower mums with knowledge and confidence throughout their pregnancies. Kicks Count has helped various members of our team through difficult pregnancies and losses and we are keen to support their work.





TEAM NEWS

Maternity news

We have welcomed lots of Mulberry Bush team babies recently, and also said goodbye to team members who have started their maternity leave and are awaiting their new arrivals.

Sarah Mather, the manager of our Walmersley nursery is now on maternity leave awaiting the arrival of her little girl. Gemma Watson, the manager of our Tottington nursery has also just started her maternity leave, and is looking forward to the arrival of her second child, a little boy. We wish them both well and look forward to hearing their news!

Poonam Bakhar at our Dumers Lane nursery goes on maternity leave soon and we wish her all the best awaiting for her new arrival. Our nursery cook at Dumers Lane, Wez Snook is awaiting the imminent arrival of his 3rd child which is very exciting.

We are very pleased to announce the safe arrival of two Tottington team member's babies, Emma Collins had a little girl called Rosa Grace and Amy McGilligan had a little girl called Lucy Anne June. Karen Wellings has now started her maternity leave and is awaiting the arrival of her little boy.

Urooj Akram from Walshaw welcomed her little girl Aisla 6 weeks early – thankfully both mum and baby are doing well – congratulations Urooj.

New management teams

In order to cover Sarah and Gemma's maternity leaves at Tottington and Walmersley, we have made some changes to our management teams, and we're very pleased to welcome three new trainee deputy managers to the management team.

At **Walmersley**, Amy Webb is acting as nursery manager, assisted by Emma Greenwood as her trainee deputy manager. Emma has transferred from our Walshaw nursery where she was head of Kindergarten. Emma has worked for Mulberry Bush for 6 years and been in childcare for 13 years. She is really excited to join our management team and is enjoying getting to know everyone at Walmersley.

At **Tottington**, our existing deputy manager Becky Flynn is stepping up to become acting nursery manager in Gemma's absence. She is assisted by Shouna Krupnyckyj as deputy manager. Shouna has transferred from our Walmersley nursery where she was their deputy manager, having previously worked at Tottington as a head of unit. She's really enjoying being back at Tottington and getting to know everyone again.

At **Walshaw**, we are pleased to welcome Lucy Crocken to the management team as a trainee deputy manager, assisting our nursery manager Stacey Wroe. Lucy is well known to all of you as our head of Kindergarten and she is really enjoying getting to grips with the extra responsibility of a management role.

At **Whitefield** Sarah Johnson our manager has been joined by Jane Hodgkinson as her deputy, who has transferred from our Dumers Lane nursery. Jane started her Mulberry Bush career at Whitefield and is really enjoying being back and getting to know all of the children and their families.



At **Dumers Lane**, our manager Melissa Platt has been joined by Gemma Drewitt as her deputy manager. Gemma has transferred from our Whitefield nursery, after having worked at all five Mulberry Bush nurseries over the 8 years she has been part of the team!

Please find some time to pop into the office and have a chat with our new managers if you haven't already had time to speak to them, they're keen to make sure that they get to know all of our families as soon as possible!

Congratulations to our graduates!

Congratulations are in order for one of our team members who has just passed her degree course with an impressive 2:1 result. Yasmin Hood, who is based in Kindergarten at Walmersley has just graduated with her degree in Education (Early Childhood). We are really proud of you Yasmin, well done!

We've all read the reports about the importance of having graduates in early years settings and the benefits to the children of this. We're so pleased to have 20 graduates in our nurseries, and 10 more are working towards their degrees. We are proud to support their professional development.

New recruits evening

We had a brilliant new starters welcome, induction and training evening last month for all of our newest team members. It was great to have an opportunity for those members of our team to meet each other, and for us all to spend some time talking about the most important aspects of our roles - keeping all of our children safe and happy.

We covered safeguarding, whistleblowing, dietary requirements, Ofsted, planning for the EYFS and lots more. An evening very well spent!





Recruitment

We have been busy recruiting new team members to join us over the last few months, as our Dumers Lane nursery fills up ahead of schedule and our pregnant team members get ready to start their maternity leave.

Whilst we have filled the majority of our vacancies, we are always on the lookout for exceptional qualified nursery nurses, so please feel free to direct any potential team members to us!

September is normally the time of year when large numbers of children move up to their next unit after our Pre-school children have left to start school. We try to make this process as smooth as possible by having a number of taster sessions and organising familiar team members to move units at the same time.

It is therefore also a great time for us to make some changes to the nursery teams so that team members can move units or even move nurseries, for promotion or to gain experience with different age groups. We do have some changes which will be taking place in August, and changes which will affect your child's unit will be detailed by a poster, displayed by the door to the unit. Any questions, please just pop into the office and speak to a member of your nursery's management team.

Achievements

Dumers Lane's Deputy Manager, Gemma Drewitt, completed her ambition to do a skydive for her 30th birthday! She jumped out of a plane at 15,000 feet and managed to raise £500 for Bury Hospice. Well done Gemma!



FIRST AID

We are just coming to the end of two months of intensive first aid training courses for our team. We have had existing team members who are renewing their qualification, new team members who were obtaining the qualification for the first time, as well as our regular yearly update training for all other team members.

You may have seen the recent coverage about the launch of Millie's Mark - an accreditation for nurseries who have excellent first aid provision in their settings. Unfortunately there's a very sad story to the background to Millie's Mark, namely the death of baby Millie Thompson, who died after choking on food in a nursery in 2012. Since then Millie's parents Joanne and Dan have worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the importance of first aid qualified staff in nurseries and of first aid generally.



As you all know, at Mulberry Bush we have always prioritised first aid training and ALL of our team members have always been fully trained in first aid. We also offer yearly update training in face to face sessions with our first aid trainer, as we know that it's critical that skills are updated and refreshed on a regular basis to ensure that our team are confident and knowledgeable should an unfortunate situation arise where they need to carry out first aid at nursery or elsewhere.

Together with our parent training sessions and our community accessible defibrillators at each nursery, we feel that we're doing a brilliant job with first aid provision in our nurseries. We will be applying for the Millie's Mark accreditation as soon as it's available and look forward to learning all about it and ensuring that we continue to do the best possible job we can for the provision of first aid in our nurseries. We'll keep you informed!

AWARDS

We are thrilled to have been shortlisted for the Nursery World Nursery Chain of the Year Award 2016. Well done to all of our fantastic team for this well-deserved recognition for all of their hard work and commitment!



The winners will be announced in September at a dinner in London, so we'll let you know how we get on. However we're up against very stiff competition from some other great nursery groups and so we're not counting our chickens. It's simply an honour to have been shortlisted.

FEE REVIEW

Details of our annual fee review are now displayed in the nurseries on parent noticeboards. As always we have sought to keep our fee increases to a minimum, but this year has seen particular pressures on our operating costs, with the introduction of auto enrolment pensions and the new living wage.

We believe our nurseries offer great value for money given the high standards of childcare and facilities we provide. The increase also reflects our commitment to rewarding and retaining our staff and re-investing in the nursery buildings and equipment - each of which enable us to continue to provide outstanding childcare.

One thing we have changed in response to feedback from parents is the way we charge for early and late sessions. Sessions which are pre-booked by 12 noon on the Friday of the week before will be charged at a lower rate. Any questions please pop into the office and ask a member of the management team.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

The transition from nursery to primary school can be rather daunting for parents as well as the children and we aim to make this move as smooth as possible. For the last couple of months, the home corner areas of our pre-school units have been turned into classrooms with a variety of different uniforms for the children to try on and lunch boxes etc. We have also been discussing schools at group time to familiarise children as much as we can.



The reception teachers of the local primary schools have been visiting our nurseries to meet the children in familiar surroundings. Our Pre-school team have previously also visited the local schools and, with permission, taken photographs of the teacher, classroom, dinner hall and playground and made a booklet which helps the children visualise what their new surroundings will be like.

Most primary schools also offer the opportunity for children to go into the school with parents for a guided tour or reading session. If you have any concerns about your child moving on to school and feel that we might be able to help, please let us know. Each pre-school unit has a list displayed so you can see which children

Leavers' parties

Many of our pre-school children have been with us from being young babies. Time seems to go so fast and it's hard to believe they'll be off to school in September. We are sure that they will all settle into their new schools very quickly and continue to enjoy their learning experiences. We hope they all enjoyed their leavers' parties at nursery and we will do our best to make their last few weeks with us as memorable as possible!

Photographs

We hope that parents of children who leave us this summer like their leavers' photograph. It's a fun day having the leavers photographs done (although not without its difficulties!), seeing all the children coming in with their big smiles ready! The leavers' photograph will no doubt become something for you to treasure in years to come!

Leaving dates

Thank you for letting us know about the date on which your child will be leaving nursery this summer, which has allowed us to calculate your final payment for nursery fees. Prior notice of leaving dates also allows us to keep those on the waiting list informed of a possible start date. We require four weeks' notice of children's change in attendance, including notice to end their place at nursery.

VACANCIES

Despite lots of our pre-school children leaving to start school in September the nurseries only have **very** limited vacancies for September and beyond due to children on the waiting lists. If you would like a place for your child's younger sibling or want to increase your child's days of attendance please ask a member of the management team for an enrolment form as soon as possible and ask them what the exact availability is like in your nursery so that you can plan.

PARENTS EVENING QUESTIONNAIRE WINNERS!

We were thrilled to see so many of you at our parents' evenings throughout May and June and we really value your close links with the nurseries. As you know, we give our lovely Mulberry Bush umbrellas as prizes for some lucky winners for completing our parents evening questionnaires so we hope these went down well and that you don't get much cause to use them this summer!



SPORTS WEEK





THANK YOU

If you have any ideas or suggestions of things we could do differently or better, please don't hesitate to bring those to any of us. All members of the team will always be happy to talk to you, and please don't forget that you are always welcome to contact any member of management or the directors with any queries or questions. We've set out all of our contact details below.

We care very much about the nurseries and all of the children in our care and are constantly striving to provide the best care we can!

Tottington Nursery	01204 88 5656	Emergency contact no: 07542 137 531 (should landline be out of action) tottington@mulberrybush-nursery.co.uk
Walshaw Nursery	0161 797 3788	Emergency contact no: 07542 137 531 (should landline be out of action) walshaw@mulberrybush-nursery.co.uk
Whitefield Nursery	0161 766 5742	Emergency contact no: 07542 137 531 (should landline be out of action) whitefield@mulberrybush-nursery.co.uk
Walmersley Nursery	0161 761 0150	Emergency contact no: 07542 137 531 (should landline be out of action) walmersley@mulberrybush-nursery.co.uk
Stacey Kenyon	07807 216 415	Senior Manager stacey.kenyon@mulberrybush-nursery.co.uk
Central Support Team	0161 761 0169	Sharon – HR Manager Cara – Accounts Manager Becci – Admin Assistant
Directors	0161 761 0127	Jo - 07872 464 283 jo.kinloch@mulberrybush-nursery.co.uk Paul - 07919 921 673 paul.robinson@mulberrybush-nursery.co.uk Andy - 07723 054 414 andy.robinson@mulberrybush-nursery.co.uk

