



RAVENSHEAD PLAYGROUP: NEWSLETTER, SEPTEMBER 2020:

Welcome back:

We hope you've all had an enjoyable and restful Summer term break, hopefully free of any illness.

Playgroup staff would like to extend a very warm welcome to the start of term on **Thursday 3rd September 2020** to all our existing children and new starters, especially following this exceptionally challenging year.

Like many other businesses, our playgroup has not been without its struggles and we have suffered staff casualties as a result of having to restructure playgroup to a smaller concern for the foreseeable future. We would like to thank all our staff team for supporting us as we remained open throughout the Covid19' pandemic, caring for key worker's children, increasing to care for a small bubble of children since June. Thank you for all your kind words, cards and gifts. They are very much valued and appreciated. Please join me to extend our very best wishes to staff members (Dawn Harvey and Tina Preston) who have now moved onto pastures new, following their commitment and hard work during their employment with playgroup.

We now embark on the rebuilding of our playgroup, as parents feel more confident during the gradual reopening of businesses within the community. Initially we will accept a maximum of 16 children per session, reduced from 26 previously. This will be reviewed in the future, as social distancing becomes more relaxed and normality returns. Our remaining staff team are committed to working closely together to ensure continuity of care for your child. Jenny Dearman will now undertake a combined role of Office administrator and Deputy manager in my absence. We are fortunate that Jenny has had previous experience of working within childcare settings and is extremely competent with office work. Your child may have a new keyworker or joint key persons. We will inform you of this as you return.

ACTIVITIES PLANNED: We are planning a range of lovely activities this term so your child can **'learn through play'** with an emphasis on traditional rhymes and stories.

SHOW & TELL WEEK: My 'family time': During the **week commencing the 7th of September** we are asking children to bring in photographs of their Summer/ family time together. We aim to talk about them during carpet time and create a display using their photographs.

SIGN & RHYME TIME: Will continue Wednesday **afternoons and Thursday mornings**, where children learn to sign new words and rhymes in a fun and engaging way, delivered by Diane. This has proven most successful in the past.

FINALLY:

We have attached a "Returning to preschool" letter to refresh you of the procedures we have in place to ensure the health and safety of everyone at our preschool.

Please feel free to approach us with any concerns or questions you may have and we will do our utmost to help. Thank you again.

Christine, Committee and team.

Returning to preschool.

To ensure a smooth start to the term, please read through this information to remind yourself of the procedures we have in place to ensure the health and safety of the everyone at our preschool.

ILLNESS: We ask that parents support us by not sending your child if you suspect they are not 100% well and refrain from entering our provision if they have any symptoms. We also ask that if your family or someone within your child's bubble has signs of Covid or have tested positive that you self-isolate (please refer to NHS Covid 19 for further information) Please inform us of any absences so we can maintain our registers. We will contact you if we feel your child is displaying any signs of illness whilst in our care. Thank you for your cooperation.

SUNCREAM: We are hoping that the sun continues to shine throughout September so please can you apply long lasting sun cream, if appropriate, prior to dropping your children off at preschool.

LABELS: Please only bring essentials in a bag clearly labelled. Could you ensure that all your child's personal items are clearly labelled to reduce time searching for items (coats, bags, hats, lunch boxes and drinks bottles etc.) This proves most time consuming for staff when we have up to 16 children.

Also, if your child is in nappies please ensure you supply enough spares as we have only a limited number of nappies.

DRINKS: We provide either water or milk within our setting, in line with the C of E School. If you wish your child to have juice then please provide a labelled bottle.

HOT MEALS: We have taken the decision, **not** to offer hot meal provision for the time being so we would be grateful if you could provide your child with a packed lunch containing an icepack for safe storage. We also ask that foods remain nut free to reduce instances of severe allergies. Thank you for your cooperation.

ACCESING THE PRESCHOOL

Following school guidance, if possible, only one adult should accompany their child/children to and from school and siblings not attending school should remain at home if at all possible. If you have no alternative option, please keep siblings by your side and adhering to social distancing.

Wherever possible please walk to school. If you should need to drive to school, please park at the end of Swinton Rise (Denbury Road end). On approaching the school, please follow the one-way system on the pavements if at all possible, with the school side of the pavement being used when you bring your child to school and the opposite side once you have dropped the children off and are leaving. This should hopefully make it easier to maintain social distancing.

Please do not arrive at the school earlier than 9am and please do not wait around the entrance or the school gates. Parents will not be allowed to enter the building, if you need to speak with a member of staff, please call us.

If you are arriving at preschool after 9am or before 3pm, the entrance gates to school will be locked. We are currently working with school to devise a system of entry and exit for preschool families throughout the day. At present we advise that when the gates are locked you can go to the KS2 school office for them to let you in, or try using the carpark intercom – Preschool Manager. If you have any difficulties at all please call us.

This is a map of the one way system provided by school:



Our commitment to ensure high levels of hygiene are adhered to are still our priority. Please leave your child's belongings on the table at the preschool entrance whilst a member of staff welcomes your child into preschool and takes them to wash their hands.

FUNDING FORMS: If your child is entitled to funding we will approach you in the coming week for you to complete and sign the relevant paperwork if you have not already done so. If you are claiming 2 year funding or 30 hours we will need the reference number.

N.B: It is important that if you claim 30 hours you must renew the application every few months to secure your eligibility.

Please ensure we have seen your child's birth certificate as this is a funding requirement for your entitlement.

PAYMENTS: All invoices will be emailed to you prior to the start of term and payments are expected within 2 weeks. Our book keeper, Jenny, has asked if parents could possibly pay invoices via BACS transfer where ever possible as this would be a great help to our payment system.

LATE PAYMENTS: Could we please remind parents of the importance of paying your child's invoices promptly. This covers our many overheads, wages, rent, resources, etc. As with any business we need to ensure there is a steady cash flow. However, if you are experiencing difficulties then please speak in confidence to Christine. Thank you.

DONATIONS: We have received in excess of £1,000 pounds worth of donations this year from office furniture to pasta, paper, games, toys to larger items such as bikes, dressing up clothes and a play kitchen. **Thank you all so much** for your generosity as we are extremely grateful for how this enhances our lovely village provision.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: Each September / October the preschool holds its AGM as required by the charities commission. We are yet to decide on a date for the Annual General meeting but we will advise you of this shortly. If you are interested in joining our committee to support the preschool, please contact a member of staff for further information.

TERM DATES:

We open Thursday 3rd September, the last day of term will be: **Friday the 16th of October, returning on, Monday, the 2nd of November.** This is a longer break than has occurred in the past. Please note if the school has any inset days then we will still be **open as usual.**

Thank you Christine, Committee and Team