



Nursery Newsletter

August/September 2017

Hi everyone, and welcome – or welcome back to Clarkston Nursery for Academic year 2017/18. As this is the first newsletter of the year, you'll be getting separate Newsletter from your parent committee. They want to introduce themselves and let you know what their roles will be over the coming year. Big thanks to them for taking up the mantle! I'm also planning to get a board for the entrance foyer so I can put the committee pictures up – this will help you identify your representatives should you need any help with anything.

By choosing Clarkston Nursery, you're choosing a unique setting which allows you to get really involved in the running of the place. We're what you call a 'third sector' nursery. This means we're a registered charity and there are no owners making money out of the setting – you are the owners. Certainly I oversee the curriculum and staffing etc., but strategic decisions involving the future of the nursery are made by you – the parents. There are only two settings like ours still in partnership with East Ren now so do get involved. I know we all struggle for time these days, but do try to support your committee in any way you can.

Staffing

As you know from my previous email, we take great delight in welcoming Ross McGhee to the nursery team as he takes up the role of Nursery Assistant. Ross is well known in the nursery having volunteered with us for many years. We take great delight in making him a permanent member of the team. Andrew is off to Glasgow Uni to get started on his teaching degree – best of luck Andrew, and do look out for him in a primary school near you in a few years.

Rona Duffy assures me she is thoroughly enjoying her new role here in Clarkston – despite the enormous amount of information she is trying to absorb! Thank you all so much for making her feel welcome. Rona does feel the same as the rest of the staff – she doesn't know where the morning disappears to in the setting.

Spaces

Quite a lot of funding does not kick in until term two this year – it's just the way the childrens birthdays fall. Now this has pro's and con's. Financially, it's a bind as the nursery doesn't reach peak income until all the wee ones are in. From a staff/child/parent point of view, it's actually quite nice. The returning children and those starting now are getting lots of attention from the staff, and the settling in can be done in a nice calm environment – so every cloud, eh? Do make our new parents feel welcome if you see them looking lost at all.

Waiting List

We're looking for someone to volunteer to take on this very important job. Kirsty Duffy has done a marvellous job for us over the past two years, but her wee one is away to school now, so it's time for her to relinquish her duties!! Kirsty leaves the waiting list very organised, so it will be a good year to take it on if you think it's something you can help with. That's Kirsty just leaving us now, so please bear in mind that the role lasts into the beginning of the next term. The period over the summer holidays is one of the most important with enquiries needing a prompt response. I really feel this is one of the most important committee roles as you are the first point of contact with parents potentially looking to use our service – get in touch if you would like more information.

Planning

We've started off this session by having a numeracy block, and we've now moved on to a literacy block. This is allowing the staff to get a clear picture of where the children in their groups are in terms of letter and number recognition, counting, pencil control etc. We're also looking at their fine and gross motor skills – so construction, balancing, awareness of space etc. This will allow the girls to pitch activities at exactly the right level for the children in their groups. Our topic planning will start again soon, and the children have chosen to learn about 'Our World'. The wee ones have expressed an interest in where other countries are and how they differ from our own, so that should make a great topic for lots of learning. If any of you have any cultural experience of other countries which you'd like to share with the children, please drop me a mail. I'll keep you up to date with which countries we're looking at as the plan progresses.

Lunch club

Please remember lunch club does not have to be booked in advance. You simply add your child's name to the sheet at reception on the day. Could I ask that you ensure you put a cool pack in the lunch box please? New guidance from the Care Inspectorate asks settings not to put lunch boxes in the fridge as they are often set down on the ground outside and could contaminate other food in the fridge. This would mean staff would have to empty everything out of the lunchboxes to store it, so all in all, a cool pack is the easiest answer. Thanks for your co-operation with this.

PM Sessions

We run afternoon sessions on a Thursday and Friday, 1pm till 2.50pm. As with the mornings, some of the children don't come on board till the turn of the year, so the committee have decided I can offer you these afternoon sessions on an ad hoc basis until such times as they fill up. So if you fancy a wee afternoon to yourself, just drop me a mail and I'll let you know about availability.

Fundraising

Just to remind you all, our clever fundraisers signed the nursery up to Easyfundraising. Just go to the website – easyfundraising.org.uk – search for Clarkston Nursery, and choose us for your donations. This basically raises funds for the nursery when you buy things you would have been buying anyway. In the past, personally I've raised donations on clothes shopping, take away food and theatre tickets. As I said, I would have bought them anyway, but through this website the nursery makes a few pennies. We also raise 5% on any uniforms purchased via School Wear Made Easy, so let me know if you're looking for anything. The fundraisers will issue you with separate newsletters detailing all their plans for the year and we appreciate you supporting them where possible.

Toys

While your child is settling, we understand that they may want to bring a comforter to nursery. Once settled, we ask that any toys your child brings with them be left in their bag in the cloakroom please. We don't want a precious item getting tidied away with our toys – think of the upset that would cause!

Keep us in Mind!

Those of you who have been with us for a while know I'm not shy about asking for donations! 19 years working in the third sector will do that! So this month, I wonder if any of you have any digital cameras lurking unused in a drawer?? Ours are getting past their best, and I know we all use our phones now, so if you have a decent one gathering dust we'd really appreciate it. Also, as the year goes on, if any of you are updating your tech and find yourselves wondering what to do with an old laptop or tablet – please consider restoring it to factory settings and donating it to nursery. We go through roughly two laptops in an academic year, and our funding really doesn't stretch to these high value items, so do keep us in mind! Also, if you find yourself in Asda (I seem to live there!) would you consider popping a wee pack of wipes or tissues into your basket for us please? Thanks in advance.

Maureen and the staff team. x