

Welcome to the Autumn Term at St Mary's Pre-school. If you are one of our new families then we are delighted to have you with us and very much look forward to working with you as your child takes their first educational steps.



There are a few things we would like to bring to your attention in this Term's Newsletter:

CHANGES TO THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE FRAMEWORK

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework is a government document that all schools and Ofsted-registered Early Years providers in England must follow. It sets standards for the learning, development, and care of your child from birth to 5 years old (up until the end of the Reception year).

As some of you may be aware, important changes came into effect in September 2021, designed to better support all children's learning and development. Staff here at St Mary's welcome the change, as less time is spent on large amounts of written observations and assessments for evidence collection, meaning more time for supporting and engaging with the children and their learning and development needs.

Your child will no longer be assessed against statements from an age band category. Instead, staff will use their experience and knowledge to monitor if a child's learning and development is 'on track' or 'not on track'. There is an emphasis on improving children's language and vocabulary through increased opportunities for conversations, reading of a wide range of books and holding discussions around activities in other areas of learning. Safeguarding and welfare is still of upmost priority, with the added mention of teaching children about the importance of good oral health and how to keep teeth clean and healthy.

The only statutory assessment we are required to do is the EYFS Progress Check at Age Two. In addition to this, we will be offering a face-to-face meeting with your child's key person each term to review your child's progress and update their One Page Profile. A 'Transition to School' document will also be completed in the summer term of the year your child is due to start primary school.

We hope that this has given you an insight into the changes and how it affects your child, but please speak to a member of staff if you would like any further details.

RECORDING OF MINOR INCIDENTS

We have reviewed and are changing how we record any minor incident in pre-school where a child suffers a minor fall, bump, bruise or behavioural difficulty whilst in our care. Each child now has a record sheet on which any incident deemed minor will be detailed. Staff complete this record with the date and time, their initials and a note of how we will have informed you as parent what happened. If the incident is more major such as a significant graze, bump, bruise, injury, behaviour etc then a member of staff will fill out a full report form which includes a generic body-map so all the details are fully documented and recorded. Parents will always be contacted in any event, and we would also remind you that we do need to know if your child comes to pre-school with any **existing bumps or bruises** which have happened at home/outside of pre-school. If anyone needs any further guidance about this please speak to a member of staff and refer to our policies and procedures, all of which are available on our website: <http://southholmwoodpreschool.org.uk/newsletters-2/policies-procedures>

SICKNESS BUGS 🤧

Generally around this time of year the winter sickness bugs start appearing (and we have seen a few cases lately). Please do not send your child into pre-school until they have been **48 hours clear** since the last bout of vomiting or diarrhea. This will help us to reduce transmission and also ensure our staff remain well.

CLOTHING

Please can we remind you that all clothing, hats, coats, shoes, wellington boots etc need to be labeled with your child's name. This includes any bag, water bottle and lunch box which also need to be clearly labelled, not only for hygiene and safety reasons, but also to help staff ensure the right child has the right items. Each year we end up with a bin full of lost property so please help us to ensure your child's belongings return home with them.

LUNCHBOXES 🍷

We promote healthy eating at pre-school, and if you would like some ideas or inspiration for healthy meals/lunchboxes please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life> for some useful help. Whilst on this point can we also remind everyone that spherical foods must be cut in half, such as grapes and tomatoes as these present a very great risk to young children as a choking hazard. Please do not send any nut-based items into pre-school – please check all packaging – as we are a nut-free environment. This includes items such as Nutella spread (or other brands).

FEES

We would appreciate prompt payment of invoices. These will cover session fees (if applicable), snack contribution, early drop-off and lunch-club. If you have a query about your invoice, or want to discuss it with us, please either email us or speak to Louise or Tina. We are investigating emailing these out to you in the future rather than sending a paper copy.

CAR PARK 🚗

As you may be aware, we rent our pre-school building from St Mary's Parish Church Council. We do not have sole right of use for the car park and access is needed at all times – particularly in the event of an emergency service vehicle needing to attend. We ask you to please park considerately and to leave promptly after dropping-off or picking up your child. Please also do not leave engines running, and do not leave younger siblings unattended in your car. If you need help please let a member of staff know.

PARENT COURSES

We do recommend that everyone registers with the Mole Valley Family Centre based at Dorking Nursery School. There are some really informative and supportive services available and more information can be found at: <https://www.molevalleyfamilycentre.co.uk/> Prior to the pandemic many parenting courses were being run locally in South Holmwood Village Hall. If these resume then we will be in touch to let you know should you be interested.

TAPESTRY

Do remember to log into your child's Tapestry account regularly. We upload images and observations all week and it's a great reflection of how your child is spending their time with us. You can add comments, photos and we welcome any journal entries about what your child has been doing at home or over the weekends.

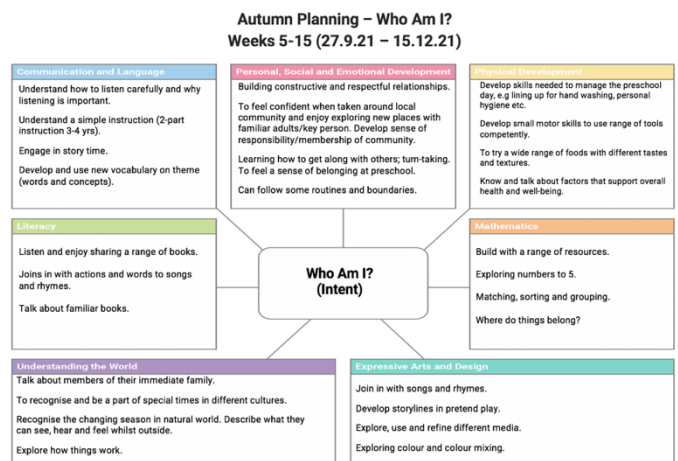


SOCIAL MEDIA

Can we please do not use social media to either contact pre-school itself or contact any member of staff directly. If you have an established, pre-existing relationship with a member of staff prior to joining pre-school please also do not direct pre-school matters to them personally via social media or messaging. It is against company policy for pre-school staff to accept 'friending' requests from our registered family members, and we ask you to please be aware of this so if a friendship request is made, please be understanding that this will be declined for these reasons.

THEMES THIS TERM

For this Autumn Term our theme is "Who Am I" as detailed in our planning diagram here. If you would like any more information about how to support and extend this learning please speak to your child's keyperson.



Thank you for all your support and help.

Louise Harrington, Manager (L3)
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Health & Safety Lead, Accounts

Tina Hillson, Manager (L3)
SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead, ELSA