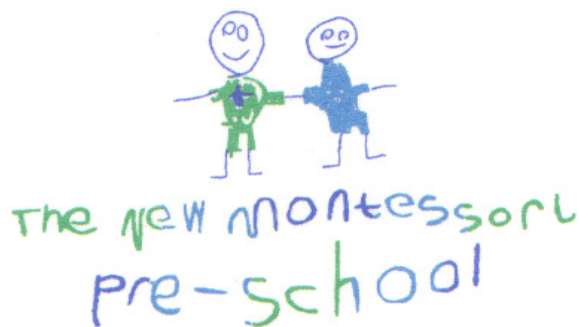


School contact number

01903 535412

Please remember you can text us!

Ask for our mobile numbers at the school.



September 2009 Newsletter

Welcome to the new academic year

Welcome especially to all our new entrants who over the course of the next couple of months will be settling into our pre-school. We have a large intake of new families and children again this term so please do make their acquaintance. Welcome back to all our 'seasoned' families and children and we trust that you all had a very pleasant summer break.

Our staff are feeling rested following the holidays and are all keen and eager to return to pre-school - as it appears the children are (of course many of you parents have expressed joy that we are back too!) The autumn/winter term is our longest term - 16 weeks long - with of course Christmas at the end of it - no doubt this term too will rush by.

With so many of our children leaving at the end of the summer term for primary school we will be observing how the children re-establish themselves into our learning environment. With our older role models now no longer here it will promote much self-esteem and confidence in many of our now older children as they become the very best child educators.

The New Montessori Pre-school has been grilled!

Last term no stone was left unturned as we were fully inspected not only by Montessori Centre International, but by West Sussex County Council and Ofsted. We all have such confidence in our pre-school that we didn't feel too challenged! All three of these reports are available for you to have through - here are some of the comments and feedback that were made:

Montessori Centre International

- *'provides a calm, happy and safe environment for the children both inside and in the outside area'*
- *'exceptionally well resourced'*
- *'dedicated staff'*
- *'the children's behaviour is excellent'*
- *'the calm atmosphere, the management of the staff and their unobtrusive interaction with the children, the self-control, respect and air of purposeful activity in the classroom make this a very good Montessori setting'*

West Sussex County Council - Early childhood environmental rating scales

- *'an excellent ECERS audit'*
- *'communication, language and literacy and problem solving and reasoning scores particularly high and will greatly support children in their achievements'*
- *'this setting has an extremely good staff/child ratio which enables the staff to support the children's interests and needs in a very positive way'*
- *'reflect upon your high scores, share with your staff and celebrate your many strengths!'*

OFSTED

- *'the setting has established good working relationships with parents/carers. Staff take time to work with them to find out about the particular needs of their child, to give them appropriate care, which also promotes and supports every child's uniqueness'*
- *'children are very happy and secure in this well-presented, welcoming and attractive environment'*
- *'the setting ensures that all children make progress towards the early learning goals and are very active in their own learning'*
- *'the management and staff team are fully committed to providing children with high quality play and learning experiences and this is clearly evident in their professional and enthusiastic interactions with the children'*

. . . I guess I had better stop now - at the risk of sounding a little too pleased and proud of ourselves! These reports and the leaving cards that we received from so many of our parents last term with very moving testimonials have, of course, delighted us.

Fee/Free Entitlement/Childcare Vouchers

Hopefully you will have received your fees for this term. It is ESSENTIAL to cash flow that we receive prompt payment IN ADVANCE of your child's sessions. We have in the past been happy to be flexible with payments but we do now request that your bill is paid promptly and certainly should never run past two weeks in arrears. Please find enclosed herewith a letter from our Management Committee pertaining to this.

As you aware, our Management Committee (which is run by parents) raised our fees from September to £4.80 an hour. Following the term after your child's 3rd birthday, your child becomes eligible to funding which goes a long way towards our term's fees. We are piloting a 15-hour entitlement scheme which means that up to 15 hours of our pre-school education is partially funded by WSCC.

We understand that our billing system can be confusing to decipher - Melinda, our Senior Classroom Manager is always happy to answer any queries you may have. We also accept Childcare Vouchers (Accor, Busy Bees and Kids Unlimited for example) and are happy to accept any new vouchers that are not currently registered with us.

Secure your child's clothing/belongings

It is important to get into the habit of ensuring that all your child's clothing and belongings are clearly named! A permanent marker initialling these items on clothes labels would go a long way in ensuring that things do not become misplaced. Space does not allow for us to keep hold of quantities of lost property.

Staff news

Sadly, we had to bid fond farewells to some members of our staff team last term. Maxine Walden, after 8 years of service and Carl Maynard who after 3 years of service have moved on to new pastures. Sharon Elliott has finished her NVQ3 placement with us and we also thank Hayward Day for his valued time spent here as our building maintenance person.

As we start a new academic year we are all given opportunities and bursaries from local government to access and further our continued professional development. We encourage and support each other in our studies.

Congratulations to Flick Rush and Jackie Buss in successfully passing their practical exams and theory at Level 2 Montessori Pedagogy to further deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Montessori ethos. Ella Farrow has successfully finished her first year on an arduous Montessori Diploma and remains just as dedicated and enthusiastic at the beginning of her second year of studies. Tatiana Halse has committed herself to studying for her degree in Montessori studies. Michelle Judge is continuing her professional development by undertaking an NVQ3. Kerry McCardle is pursuing her interest in signing and commences her sign language course shortly and Claire Morgan, Melinda Day and Tatiana Halse are renewing their training in Paediatric First Aid.

Partnership with parents and carers

We are very committed to working in partnership with you. There are frequent opportunities for you to share relevant information with staff to enable us to meet your child's needs. There is a wide range of policies and procedures in place to support our clear aims which are readily available for you to read.

There are excellent opportunities provided for parental involvement within our pre-school - either as a Parent Helper within the classroom, or as an active member serving on our management committee or becoming involved in the fun of fundraising. Last term we were fortunate to have a couple of fathers come in and discuss their job roles at Circle Time - something that is of great interest to the children - or perhaps you can play an instrument or are a natural story teller. If you would like to become more involved in one way or another do please let Claire know of your interest.