



St Mark's Pre-School Newsletter

This Terms Activities

February 2023

We are so proud of how well our new starters have settled in over the past few weeks. All of our existing children been wonderful at helping them settle.

Our first topic this month was all about pirates and princesses. The children have been enjoying dressing up in various new dressing up outfits and these have proved very popular. In the creative area the children have been busy decorating and designing princess dresses along with pirate flags and Chinese New Year dragons. We have been learning about Chinese New Year and the year of the rabbit, we have been looking at lots of informative pictures about the Chinese culture. In the literacy area the children have been able to practice writing the Chinese numbers from 0-10 using the magnetic boards. This activity helps the children with mark making, and helps develop their pencil control. We have had fun with treasure maps and the children have been using them to find hidden treasure around the room. We have been using the balance beam as a pirate's plank and the children were very careful to not fall into the ocean with the sharks.

Our second topic this month has been all about dinosaurs. In the sand tray the children have been learning how to be palaeontologist and uncovering dinosaur fossils using brushes. In the maths area we have been using the cubes to measure different dinosaurs, we then counted the cubes and tried to find the matching number. This activity helps the children to count in sequences and to recognise their numbers. In the literacy area we have been identifying different fossils and marking our findings down on a fossil hunter log where the children have been able to describe the size and shape of each fossil they found. In the tuff tray we have had a dinosaur small world area where we have been learning the names of all the dinosaurs and whether they are herbivores, carnivores or omnivores and what this means.

The children have been busy at home making some amazing items from the fortnightly challenge which they have brought in to show their friends and teachers. Well done everyone!

Children with covid-19 should not attend their education setting while they are still infectious, they should return to their setting as long as they do not have a temperature and are well in themselves after the 3 days recommended isolation.

We would like to also remind parents that if your child is unwell and requires Calpol then they are not well enough to attend Pre-School.

Half Term Topics

This half terms topics will be.

Week 5 – 06/02/2023 – Transport / Valentine's Day.

Week 1 – 20/02/2023 – Emergency services / pancake day

Week 2 – 27/02/2023 – Emergency services / St David's day

Week 3 – 6/03/2023 – Military

Week 4 – 13/03/2023 – Military / St Patricks day / Mother's Day

Week 5 – 20/03/2023 – Spring

Week 6 – 27/03/2023 – Spring / Easter

Mother's Day Morning

On Thursday 16th of March would like to invite our mummies, Aunties or Grandmothers in for a special Mother's Day morning. We will have tea and coffee and a selection of cakes as well as some fun activities for you to take part in. The session will run from 10:30 till 11:30m am. Unfortunately, we are unable to have siblings attend the session.

Activities at Home Box

We are very pleased to be introducing our activity at home box again. This box will be available every morning for you to choose and activity to share with your child at home. Please fill in the book to sign in and out your activity.

Internet Safety

Online safety advice More and more pre-schoolers are using their parents' computers, smartphones or tablets to play games, use apps, and watch their favourite TV shows. There are simple things you can do to make sure they're using the internet safely. Copy and paste the following link for further online safety advice. www.internetmatters.org

Working in Partnership with Parents

We would like to thank all the parents who log in, makes comments and add their own observations onto tapestry. We value our partnership with parents and this is a wonderful tool to enable us to do this. These home observations give us a chance to see things we are unable to observe within pre-school and provides great topics of conversation between your children and all the staff. We hope that you enjoy seeing what your children do during their time day and this is also a wonderful keepsake of their journey with us which you will keep once they move on from pre-school.

Mrs. Odam's Fortnightly Challenge

Every fortnight Mrs Odam will be setting an exciting challenge for you and your child to complete at home.

The challenge will be uploaded onto tapestry every other Monday and we would love for you to add your pictures and comments onto tapestry any time before the next challenge is set, so we can see how well you have done.

We believe this will be a great way to gain stronger links between Pre-School and home and involving parents within their child's learning and development.

30 Hour Funding

If you are eligible to apply for the 30hrs childcare funding from April 2023 you can apply between the 15th January and the 28th February 2023. If you are unsure whether you are able to apply you can use the childcare calculator on the childcare choice's website.

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Once you have received your code, please give this to Lorraine.

Show and Tell Table

The children very much enjoy bringing items in from home to share with their friends at the end of the session. This is a great way for the children to listen to others and share what they have, building speech and language development. The show and tell table is the red table, located at the back of hall on the left. We ask that items being brought in are theme related or something special, for example if they have had a birthday or been somewhere for a visit. The themes can be found on the first page of the newsletter under what we have been learning about. The themes are also always displayed on the poster above the table and changed weekly if your child is unsure of what they can bring.

Proud Clouds

Our children all love to achieve new things. At Pre-School we want to hear all about it too! Proud clouds are shared with everyone at the end of the session. Proud clouds are a chance for you to share what your child has achieved i.e., learning to count, riding a bike, becoming independent in getting dressed. These are all massive achievements and we want to share it. If your child has done something amazing, please write it down on a coloured shape which can be found on the parents table and give it to a member of staff. Once it has been read out it will be attached to our proud clouds which can be found on the garden door windows. Please ask if you have any questions about proud clouds.

Consumables

From April we will be increasing our Consumables contribution. This will now be £10 per half term; the cost will cover items such as;

Wipes
Additional snack / Milk
Tissues
Hand sanitiser

Testimonies

We would like to be able to display some testimonies on our website, if any of our parents would like to write a testimony, we would be very grateful. These can be emailed to Lorraine.

Thank you

Bags and Welly Boots

Please remember to bring a bag in for your child with a full spare set of clothes in, to be left on the trolley in the foyer area. Please also remember to bring in welly boots on the days your children attend. The children are encouraged to be independent in their dressing so shoes with Velcro rather than laces please.

Book Bags

Every two weeks the children will be able to choose a book to bring home and share with you. Once your child has finished their book you can bring back their book bags and place them in to their keyworkers box. This is a great way for the children to share stories with you and encourages the joy for reading.

Forest School

All children need to bring in their own forest school backpack. This back pack needs to be big enough for the children to have a complete change of clothes, (top/bottoms/pants/socks) nappies and a spare set of waterproofs in, but small enough that they are able to carry it. They will also require a small named water bottle to go in this back pack.

Can we please ask that you let the teachers partner up the children for the walk into the forest, they are partnered up on age and ability following a pre-organised list. The children can find it upsetting if they are moved after parents have let them choose who's hand they would like to hold.

Thank you

Fees

From 20th February 2023 will shall be increasing our fees slightly in line with inflation.

Our fees are as follows;
2yr old, 3hr session was £19.20 to £20.40
2yr old, full day session was £33.60 to £35.70
Top up of funding hours was £5.15 to

Oral Health

As part of the early years' foundation stage (EYFS, 2021) we are required to support oral health.

A regular teeth cleaning routine is essential for good dental health. Follow these tips and you can help keep your child's teeth healthy.

[Children's teeth - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

Healthy Lunchboxes

At St Mark's Pre-School, we will provide a piece of fruit ready to eat (i.e., a banana or apple) during snack time. We will provide additional snack such as toast, flatbread and crumpets etc. as well as water or milk to drink. We ask parents if their child brings grapes for lunch, they need to be cut in half length ways and not left whole or cut width ways. Grapes are the perfect size to block a child's windpipe and pose a choking hazard.

Lunches, please ensure that your child's lunch box is also a healthy one, please, no big bars of chocolate, sweets or fizzy drinks. Please could we ask that the food in your child's lunch box is healthy and has good nutritional value to it.

For example: A sandwich/wrap/roll with nutritional filling i.e., cheese, ham, chicken etc. Or pasta. A piece of fruit / vegetable sticks Yoghurt / cheese
Crisps / popcorn, small treat

We want to promote a good varied diet with our children but following the Healthy Lunch Box values which the schools also adept. As a reminder, please no large bars of chocolate, large chocolate biscuits, sweets or fizzy drinks.

For ideas of lunchbox ideas please visit

www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes

Forest School Winter Kit

Now the weather is becoming colder I would like to give you a kit list for our Forest School sessions.

* Warm layers i.e., vest, long sleeve top and fleece/jumper - thermal or ski items are warmer. Legging's underneath jeans or joggers - thermal or ski items are warmer

* Wellies/walking boots/ski boots with wellie warmers or ski socks

* Heavy duty waterproof coat and trousers - please do not send children in all in ones once they are potty trained as it makes it very difficult for children to go to the toilet independently. The children also get wet if it's raining when we remove them for toileting.

* Waterproof mittens on elastic

* Waterproof hat

* Neck warmers are safer than scarves

Please also remember to label everything.

Decathlon in Farnborough provide a vast range of the above clothing layers/boots etc. either in the ski section or the camping section at very competitive prices. Millets and Trespass are also good retailers

Please don't forget to apply insect repellent to your children.

Please check for your child for ticks after each forest school sessions. Ticks are small, spider like creatures that live in woods and long grass. They are not something we can check for when we enter the forest. They attach themselves to skin that brushes past them. A tick bites into the skin and feeds on blood before dropping off a few days later.

Ticks can cause Lyme disease, which is a bacterial infection that can be spread to humans by infected ticks. Some people suffer with flu like symptoms in the early stages of the disease. These include: a high temperature or feeling hot and shivery, headaches, muscle and joint pain and tiredness and loss of energy. Not everyone with Lyme disease gets the rash.

For more information on Lyme disease please visit
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/>

Facebook Page

Please take a look and like our Facebook Page (St Mark's Pre-School) to receive daily/weekly notices, diary dates and also to find out what we have been doing with your children throughout the week.

Diary Dates

- Friday 10th February – End of term
- Monday 13th – Friday 17th February – Half term
 - Monday 20th February – First day of term
- Thursday 16th March – Mother's Day morning 10:30 – 11:30am
 - Friday 31st March – End of term

Birthday Stars

February – Maisie.

Keep up-to-date with the latest information, diary dates, Forest School sessions and more,
on our Website and Facebook page;

www.stmarkspreschool.info