



SMARTIES NEWSLETTER Spring 2018



STAFF NEWS

We were extremely sad to lose John from 3-4's who has left to further his career working in finance. John had been with us for 5 years and will be missed by us all. We wish him lots of luck in his new position.

NEW STAFF

New staff joining the nursery include:

- Laura Hughes – Qualified to degree level and training for her Early Years Teaching qualification. Laura has joined the 3-4's team.
- 2 new apprentices – Alex (working in the 18mths room) and Olivia (in the Baby room) are both working towards their NVQ Level 2. Lisa our Deputy who is a trained Early Years Teacher is their mentor. We had numerous applicants but these two impressed us with their level of commitment and interaction with the children. We welcome both girls to the Smarties family.

Due to the change in staff and to maintain strong teams some staff moves have been required. They are as follows:

- Laura Edwards (18mths room leader) to assist Heather in leading the 3-4's.
- Hannah has moved to run the forest school – she is qualified as a forest school leader and loves it!
- Becca has moved from the baby unit to lead the 18mths room with Steph as her deputy. Becca has been a room leader in this room before and has 12 years' experience with us

To get to know new faces in the rooms please see the staffing charts on the walls in each unit.



Olivia



Alex



Laura H



Rachel (Baby nursery) Rhiannon and Katie (Middle nursery) have just handed in or are about to hand in the last pieces of work for their Level 2 and 3 qualifications. We are going to keep on all three staff as they have worked exceptionally hard and have developed into valued members of the Smarties team. Well done girls!

TRAINING

We really value training and CPD at nursery. Over the last few months staff have been on several training courses including:

- Phonics – How to develop and use phonics
- WELCOMM – Use of WELCOMM pack to identify and support children with SEN
- First Aid - Update and gaining Paediatric First Aid Certificates
- Behaviour Management – Understanding why children react and behave in certain situations and how to develop strategies to support them
- Safeguarding – Refresher course and qualifications
- Food Hygiene – Refresher course and qualifications
- Total Communication – Assisting children with language delays

WHAT'S NEW AT SMARTIES.....?

FOREST SCHOOL – IT'S GROWING!

It all looks so good out there and the whole forest school is definitely a favourite with the children – so much so **we are going to expand it** in the spring and the area will include the two large hills in the field and a further undercover area.

Hannah has embraced her role as Forest school Leader and is introducing some wonderful new experiences for the children. We have new resources including;

- New paths for easy access through the forest garden which look great and will make it easier to use through the very wet winter months. Well done Pete – he has worked like a trojan.
- A cover so they can have use the fire pit even when it is raining,
- New outdoor suits and wellies – extremely high quality for warmth and frequent washing!
- Additional resources for the mud kitchen such as a pestle and mortar, jugs, funnels, etc
- A small pond to help to attract some different wildlife. The pond has been fully risk assessed and will be covered at all times when not in use.

The willow tunnels have been re-woven from there new growth to provide shady reading spots in summer.





RONALD AND OUR NEW INCUBATOR!

Here is Ronald. He is our new Cockerel and very proud of his new charges. The girls (our hens) gave him a bit of a brush off at first but he is now definitely in charge and the girls follow him everywhere.

Rachel Whelan, a parent in the 3-4's room emailed us with a link to an organisation that provided a facility to hire an incubator and eggs. We decided immediately this would be a fantastic experience for the children and so the eggs and the incubator are sitting in the 3-4's with the children tending the incubator daily. The children can look at the eggs and see how the chickens are developing inside the eggs with the use of a torch. The eggs are due to hatch around on the 9th of April and like all expecting parents we are very excited and waiting with baited breath!



NEW IPADS

We have now purchased iPad for all our rooms. These will be used by the staff to research new activities for the children and for recording information for the children's learning journeys. Below are three websites we use for researching ideas for children's activities. Click on the logos to be taken through to each websites;



If you are looking for ideas for activities, inspirational spaces or new experiences for at home then have a look.

IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday 3rd – Friday 13th April

Smartcare – Easter holiday club

Tuesday 29th May – Fri 1st June

**Smartcare Forest School holiday club
(to be held at Smarties)**

Monday 30th April

Group Leavers photo - TBC

Saturday 12th May

Charity Fun Day –

**This year raising money for 2 charities
run by parents from Smarties:**

**Elsie Ever After - Bereavement support
for families and Arian Teleheal – Live tel-
medicine healthcare guidance in war
zone areas**

For more dates and information

[CLICK HERE](#)

to be taken through to our website calendar

EYFS CHALLENGES

Late last year we decided to try and be innovative with our staff development. One of our ideas has resulted in setting challenges within the rooms for staff to find interesting and new ways to use resources. Obviously, there is an incentive and the winning room team receive a prize!

Our last challenge was on innovative ways to use music for the children and the activities designed by the staff were amazing. The challenge was judged by visiting parents and this time the Middle nursery downstairs room won with their outdoor music wall (see picture).



Not only do your children benefit but the staff are loving the fun competition between the rooms

The latest Challenge is on ICT – we are buzzing all through the nursery!



3-4's NEW TOYS

The pre-school room have had a new water / sand tray and storage unit purchased for their room with a vast selection of resources to use with it. The room has been reorganised to display the new and existing resources and toys giving the children easy access. It is already proving to be exceptionally popular. Sand and water are a fantastic learning resource – even though very messy sometimes!

IMPROVING PRACTICE



We are always looking for ways to improve our practice so we have signed up to start the NDNA Quality Counts Accreditation Scheme.

Quality Counts provides a framework for continuous improvement with a focus on taking the whole staff team through the learning journey; evaluating the quality of their provision for children.

We have a year to complete this but hope to have it done sooner. We achieved this accreditation a few years ago and are sure we can do it again.

We have also just signed up to Millie's Mark. Millie's Mark is named after Millie Thompson, who died after choking on food at nursery in 2012 when she was just nine months old. By completing Millie's Mark it shows that we are going above and beyond minimum requirements to keep your children safe with 100% of our staff being First aid trained.



HEALTHY EATING

Our Spring menus will be implemented in the next month. Jenny Rita and Annie have reviewed the menus and added some new interesting recipes. Please remember that children often have to try a new food several times before their taste buds accept it.

We are striving to improve children's diets and experiences with foods and would be more than happy to offer advice or recipes to parents. The Children's Food Trust have just brought out a new initiative- Eat Better Start Better. It has been proven that children who eat healthy diets do better at school. There are numerous resources and recipes on their interesting website.

Go to: <http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/>. It is a really nice user-friendly website



EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

As part of the nursey we include:

PETITE DANCE AND DRAMA ACADEMY where the children enjoy drama with puppets. This has proved really popular with the children and covers several areas of the EYFS. Zippy Zappy Zoo is the very popular opening and closing song of the session. We are sure you will have heard your children sing it and if you want the words just let us know – although it is a song that sticks in your head for the remainder of the day!

DIDDI DANCE rotate their days throughout the year and have been a part of the nursery for several years. The children not only love the songs but benefit from the physical development offered by these sessions.

MUSIC is now being offered by Rebecca who a member of Smarties staff. Rebecca has been made supernumerary two afternoons per week to offer music and singing the children and her piano playing rivals Music Meg! The children are loving the sessions- as is Rebecca. It has been proven that children benefit from hearing repeating songs and stories both of which are a valued part of learning.

GYM- We are just coming to the end of Gym sessions offered by Little Super Stars which the children have loved. We are now looking for an alternative provider as we would like to offer Gym on rotating days, but we may also consider other alternatives. Any suggestions welcome.



ALSO OFFERED AT SMARTIES – OPTIONAL EXTRA ACTIVITIES:

NEW -JOLLY JOCKEYS RIDING LESSONS

Riding sessions will start on Monday 9th April. If you are interested in your child taking part please follow this link - <https://goo.gl/forms/WiKunjyGnNzoc5I2>

You will be able to register your interest on their website and pay in advance for the sessions. The cost is £10 for 15 minutes and £20 for 30 minutes. Once that is done you will be all ready to start in April! Please note that the children must be 2 years old to take part and the lessons will be on a 1:1 basis with the instructor



BALLET & DANCE

Mrs Hanlon runs dance sessions on a **Tuesday and Thursday at 1pm**. Please call if you are interested. Her classes are always popular and the dancers have loved performing in our Christmas play. Her telephone number is: **07792 755601** or visit hanlonschoolofdance@outlook.com



TENNIS

Spring is here and we hope to start tennis again on a **Monday afternoon**. Gary from **Whackit** has offered tennis sessions for the last few years and the sessions have been really popular, with many children carrying on with coaching after leaving Smarties. If you would like your child to have lessons please call **07836 273271** or visit www.whackit.com



GOLF

Roger is still very much part of the week at Smarties and his golf lessons are on a **Tuesday afternoon**. The children always seem to be having fun and the size of the club heads used ensure that their strike is nearly 100% effective! If you are interested in signing your children up for golf please call **07735 421306** Or email info@rogershuttgolf.co.uk

