



## Welcome to the summer edition of our newsletter.

This term has been an exciting time in our nurseries, and as we celebrate the graduation of our children who are starting school in September we wish them every happiness and success for their continuing care and education.



The introduction of our latest programme **ku:physical** has been very well received, and we are about to open two new nurseries at Timperley in Cheshire and at the former Arsenal football stadium in Highbury in London. Both nurseries have received a lot of enquiries and we already have a number of children registered to attend.

In this newsletter our parents' tips contain some advice and guidance to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible for children moving on to their next stage of their learning journey.

We have also looked at the last two areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy and we hope that our practical explanation of these subjects is useful to you along with our ideas for how you can continue your child's development at home.

We are continuing to invest in staff training and development to attract and retain the very best people to care for your children. We are introducing a staff reward scheme which will recognise staff that make extra effort in their roles, and we encourage our parents and carers to let us know which staff they believe should be considered for this award as your views are most important to us.

I do hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter. Please let your nursery manager or the team at central office know if there are any topics that you would like us to include in future newsletters.

**Rosamund Marshall**  
CEO

## New programmes

We have been delighted with the success of **ku:physical** since its launch in the spring. The children have been thoroughly enjoying using all the new equipment and participating in **ku:challenges** to raise funds for various local charities across the country. The programme was designed by Sue Morrison who has been working with young children to encourage their love of being active and help develop their physical skills.

Harwell nursery children and staff enjoying **ku:physical**



## Preparing for 'big school'

So the time has come.....your little one is about to don their school uniform, along with all the regalia; book bags, PE kits and lunch boxes and a new routine...**the start of reception class.**

This can be stressful for both you and your child, but with a deep breath and a clear plan, it will go swimmingly and become a very special memory, but be assured your eyes are still likely to prickle as you proudly see them off into their classroom!

To help prepare both of you for this moment, talk to your child about school on a regular basis and buy all the necessities together; have the clothes, book bag, lunch box, and PE kit etc out in a 'special' ready for school box. Let your child look and play with these items in the couple of months leading up to school.

**Some books you may like to read with your child are:**

- The First Day of School – Tony Forward
- Harry and the Dinosaurs go to School – Ian Whybrow
- A Big Kiss for Little Alice – Sally Gridley
- I am too Absolutely Small for School – Lauren Child
- Little School – Beth Norling

Show your child on the calendar when they will be starting school, this way it will not come as a surprise, go a little out of your way to drive past and casually mention "oh look your lovely new school". They will become familiar with the journey, embedding and building their confidence.

Some schools allow parents to stay with their child on the first day until they are settled, check if your school permits this, and then let your child know. If you do stay, you must be unobtrusive and aim not to cuddle and keep your child close by, but encourage them to select toys and 'have a go', otherwise it can be even more distressing for them when you leave.

After school ensure you engage with your child about what they have been doing, praise your child for their achievements. You may like to plan to have a special tea, take a walk in the park, or do something which is meaningful to your family as a symbol of a special occasion.

Above all your child needs to become confident and independent about going to school. We hope you will find our suggestions useful but recommend you follow your instincts about what will work best for your child, and they should be well prepared for their transition to school.



## Top tips

**Be organised the night before**, both you and your child lay out all they need in order to get ready in the morning, this can then be incorporated into your daily routine with your child eventually laying out their own clothes etc.

**Another tip for starting the day** on the right foot is to consider buying a child friendly alarm clock, which you set together, allowing the child to be woken up like a grown up.

**A good morning routine is crucial**, so have this planned in your mind prior to the first day, and for the first week or so, allow an additional half an hour, until everyone is used to it. We know children respond well to routine and if they are set up for the day in a positive and familiar way, they are much more likely to have a good day at school.

# Nursery News



## Body Shop, Littlehampton, West Sussex

Parents, children and **kidsunlimited** staff joined together in June to celebrate the nursery's 20th anniversary. They enjoyed a picnic, with a bouncy castle, tombola and a grand raffle.

A highlight of the day was the "Gruffalo" story chosen by the children and acted out by the nursery staff.

All activities were designed to raise much-needed funds for Sophie Nugent from Angmering who has cerebral palsy which leaves her unable to walk or stand on her own. The day successfully raised £1000, £500 of which was presented to Sophie's mum to contribute towards her operation fund. The rest of money will be invested in the nursery outdoor area and equipment.

**kidsunlimited** nursery manager Emma Bowman said *"Everyone had a wonderful time - it was a fantastic fun day. There is a great community spirit at **kidsunlimited** Body Shop and we are delighted to be supporting a local family."*

## Mary Seacole, London

At the end of June toddlers from the Mary Seacole nursery in London went on a trip to Gospel Oak Farm, accompanied by nursery staff, parents and carers. The children had a picnic, picked fruit, and met a variety of farm animals and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



## Long Road, Cambridge

Future and existing parents were brought together at our Long Road nursery for a parents' social evening. The informal event allowed parents whose children are due to start at the nursery to meet current parents and staff, have a tour of the nursery and ask questions on topics such as the Early Years Education Grant and how to help their child settle into nursery. The evening was a great success and there are more events planned for Long Road and other **kidsunlimited** nurseries over the summer.

**To find out more information on these events please speak to your nursery manager.**

# Nursery News (continued)

## Summerfields, Wilmslow, Cheshire

To celebrate the start of summer and the recent investment in **ku:gardening** our Summerfields nursery held a very special gardening competition.

Tiny tots from each of the nursery's age appropriate rooms worked hard planting and digging in preparation for the competition. It was judged by **kidsunlimited** Head of Northern Operations, Cary Rankin and a special guest judge from Wilmslow Garden Centre.

The 'Summerfield in Bloom' competition saw the children at the nursery competing for some special prizes including some kindly donated tools, seeds and plants from the garden centre.

Winners of the event were the pre-school children who presented a beautiful garden featuring sunflowers, tomatoes, pansies and a compost corner. The children's garden also features a recycled shelving unit and a 'Chill out Zone'.

Commenting, Nursery Manager, Ursula Krystek-Walton said *"ku:gardening takes place all year round both inside and outdoors and it is a vital way for children to understand the impact of nurturing and caring. We wanted to organise an event to help celebrate the launch of the programme and reward the children's efforts."*



## Harwell, Didcot

Children from **kidsunlimited** Harwell enjoyed raising money for Barnardo's in a sponsored Toddle Waddle last month and managed to raise an astonishing £847.

The pre-school children paraded around the local area with duck hats they made especially for this occasion.

The younger children went on a treasure hunt, following a trail of duck foot prints around the nursery garden.

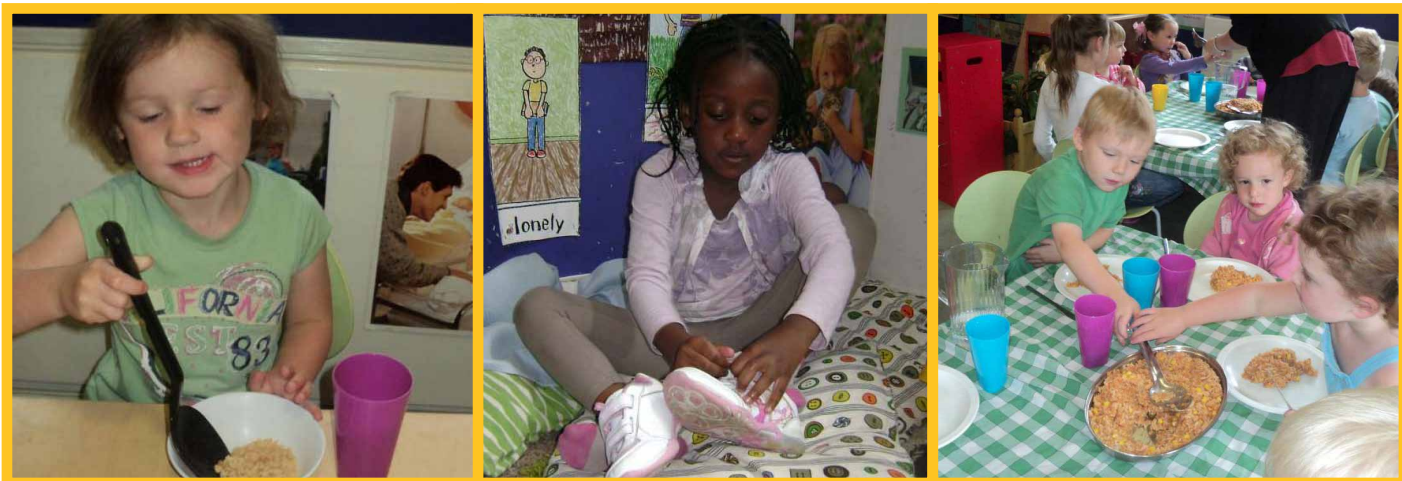


## Awards for Hamilton

Nursery Nurse Michelle Slaven has organised a committee of parents and staff to promote healthy lifestyles at nursery and home. As a result of the hard work Hamilton has achieved a Silver Award in Health Promoting Nurseries from NHS Lanarkshire.

The nursery has also gained an ECO Bronze Award after Ashley Rafferty worked with parents and children to reduce waste and encourage recycling.

# Focus on Personal, Social & Emotional Development



**In nursery Personal, Social and Emotional (PSE) development is all about helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others. We aim to teach the children to respect each other and their environment, and encourage social skills whilst developing an eagerness to learn.**

The single most important way to achieve this is by dedicating a Key Person to each child. Your child's Key Person obviously cannot be present in nursery 100% of the time and so, wherever possible, we assign a co Key Person. It is the responsibility of the Key Person and co Key Person to undertake all personal care of their key children, and make observations and plans to facilitate children's developmental steps. For our babies this is particularly important and it will be one of these two staff who will feed and change your child as well as liaise with you each day.

Children's confidence to explore and make decisions grows when they are acknowledged and affirmed by people important to them. Opportunities for children to develop their own ideas and to make choices in play. Rooms also include pictures and images that reflect the varying lifestyles and cultures of the children in that room, helping them to embrace differences and similarities. Staff use the information you share about your family and lifestyle to establish opportunities for play and learning that acknowledge these similarities and differences.

Being able to 'get on' with others is another very important aspect of PSE and through activities such as circle time, small group activities and role-play we encourage children to listen to each other, acknowledge a variety of emotions, take turns and to negotiate with each other. Wherever possible we encourage children to be independent, for example, washing hands, managing clothes, serving themselves at meal times and pouring their own drinks. We also work hard at encouraging children to care for their environment by using resources appropriately and assisting in tidying away.

Children need adults to set a good example and staff in our nurseries take care to ensure they speak and interact with each other in ways that provide strong role models for our children.

## Tips for parents at home

Do not always do everything for your child, give them age-appropriate tasks and ensure you offer enough time for them to do this i.e. putting on their own shoes, tidying toys etc.

Help your child to become aware of other close family members 'special' occasions by making birthday cards and small gifts.

Let your child's Key Person know of any changes, difficulties, special events, that may have happened or are planned at home.

Explain things that make you happy or sad.

Ensure you have clear boundaries and expectations for behaviour.

Try to find a time each day that you can spend just playing with your child.

# Focus on Problem Solving, Reasoning & Numeracy

**Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy or PSRN as it is referred to within your child's nursery and the Early Years Foundation Stage, sounds fairly daunting particularly when you see the sub-headings of 'Numbers for Labels and Counting', 'Calculating', and 'Shape, Space and Measure'. It is however, something children engage in each day in nursery through their various play activities.**

Our babies begin their PSRN development by crawling into the sand tray, sitting in the large cube or triangle or playing with cardboard boxes. They continually empty and replace objects in containers and they love rolling balls across the floor, all of which support their early mathematical development. Staff sing counting songs and rhymes helping babies to become familiar with the rhythm and patterns of numbers. For ideas of different nursery rhymes please visit the **ku:fun** section on our website.

From toddlers through to pre-school each room has an area which provides specific resources to support this aspect of development, where children may weigh, sort, measure, match and compare. But what if your child rarely chooses to play in this area, will he/she miss out on this significant area of development? It is important to remember mathematics does not depend on specific mathematical resources but on children having opportunities to develop mathematical concepts and understanding.

Our room activities are planned around children's interests and are developed to include all six of the EYFS areas of learning. So for example, if your child's favourite area happens to be construction then his/her Key Person will ensure that she includes counting, comparing and measuring into this activity. In the garden, den building provides a wonderful opportunity to practice Shape, Space and Measure skills – finding a box the right size for a doorway or a sheet large enough to make a roof. Filling and emptying buckets of water or sand help develop an understanding of volume and capacity.

Displays within each room assist children in their growing awareness of numerals and their values; this is further supported by regular cookery sessions when children use scales to weigh and measure ingredients.

Staff also make good use of daily routines to support number associations with children, for example, counting children before leaving the room to go to the garden and setting the correct number of places at lunch time.



Role play in an external construction area.



Beatrice developing an awareness of shape, form and texture.



Kara using numbers for labels and counting, sorting objects and matching shapes.

## Tips for parents at home

Use numbers in your conversations and try wherever possible to back these up visually with your child, for example, 'we are going out in 5 minutes' and show 5 fingers whilst you are saying it.

Count the stairs as you go up and down them.

Play simple board games such as snakes and ladders.

Let children help sort the laundry – match socks, gloves etc.

Point out numbers and shapes when you are out, either in the car or walking, for example, house numbers, speed restriction signs, car number plates.

Have a range of jigsaws and join in with helping your child to complete them.