

Summer Term Newsletter

As life outside of nursery starts to become a bit more normal and a bit more fun, at Carousel we are looking forward to removing our own restrictions and even hosting some parent events! We hope you will enjoy reading this term's newsletter, and would encourage you to take note of some of our news and information pieces.

Focus Article: Starting School

Starting primary school is one of the biggest transitions in a child's life, and if it is your first, or indeed your last child starting school, it can be an emotional and jittery time for you as a parent as well. But most children love school and they are taking a very exciting step into a new chapter of their lives, in which they will learn new skills and grow in their independence.

There are a few ways that you can help your child be prepared for starting school. At nursery we are working on all of the same things too, so it is likely that your child will be fully prepared for the change. Parents do not need to worry about their child's maths and English skills before they start school. This, after all, is what school is for. But it is important that your child can do certain things independently, as you won't be there to help them and school is a very different environment to nursery.

It is important that children can go to the toilet on their own. This includes sitting on the toilet, wiping themselves, flushing and washing their hands all by themselves. Children should be able to do up the fastenings on their clothes and shoes (keep them simple!) and eat independently—this includes being able to open their lunch box and all of the food inside it by themselves. Practicing all of these things will mean your child doesn't find themselves stuck and embarrassed in a new place surrounded by new people.

It is also important to prepare your child emotionally for the transition, by talking to them positively about school and the fun things they will do there. Talk to them about making new friends, what they will learn, school trips and the playground! Give them an opportunity to air any concerns or worries they might have and take these seriously, but try to be light-hearted and relaxed in how you deal with them.

It is a good idea to practice the school run before their first day, and to practice putting on and taking off their uniform and PE kit. Something else that can be very useful for starting school is ensuring that your child can recognise their name written down. They do not need to be able to write it, but being able to find it in the cloakroom or on clothing will be helpful for them. We are already doing this at nursery and are confident all of our children will be able to recognise their name before they leave.

Parents also need to prepare themselves for their child starting school, especially if this is your first child. Schools cannot be in as regular contact with parents as nursery staff can and daily contact is unlikely. Of course schools and teachers can be contacted if you have any concerns, but updates about your child's progress and how they are getting on is likely to be limited to reports and Parents' Evenings. It is a good idea to go to as many events and meetings as possible that the school offers, as this will increase your contact with them. Parents should also be prepared for their child being very tired at the end of the day. Even if you want to know everything they have done at school, don't bombard them with too many questions!

At Carousel we have a refined transition process for all of our pre-school leavers. We will be in contact with all of the schools our children are going to and will encourage teachers to come in to meet the children, if they are willing. Each child has their own personalized transition form that gets sent to their new school and we are already working on a number of skills to ensure school-readiness. This year we will also be hosting a Parents' Evening before our children leave, so this will be an opportunity for you to discuss your child's progress and development before they start school.

Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-school

Issue 4

May 2021

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Nursery news

- In July Katharine will have completed her Early Years Teacher Training course. This will qualify her as an Early Years Teacher, and is the equivalent to a Level 6 childcare qualification. Katharine has learned an awful lot on the course and hopes to continue to raise the teaching standards at Carousel by implementing everything she has learned.
- This term we installed a new heating system at Carousel, with a new combination boiler and high wall-mounted radiators. This has made our heating system more efficient and has created more space in the rooms as the radiators and covers have been removed. The children and staff alike will benefit from this improved heating and increased play space.
- Please note that our fees will be increasing by 5% in September 2021.
- To improve the logistical management of the nursery, we will be changing the staff's shift pattern from 31st May. This will mean that all staff work on all days, doing the same number of hours as now. You should see your child's key person more often either at pick up or drop off.
- **Dates for your Diary:**
21st June—Parents will be allowed back into the nursery!
Jamaica Week—7th-11th June
Parents' Evening—7th July
Family Fun picnic for upper nursery—24th July
Family Fun picnic for lower nursery—14th August
Last day for pre-school leavers—27th August



Something new—Home Learning Area for website

In the coming weeks we will be launching a new area on our website called the Home Learning Area. This page will enable parents to work in partnership with us to give their children an excellent education when they are at home. Studies have shown that the quality of a child's Home Learning Environment has a huge impact on their educational and health outcomes in later life. Therefore it is our responsibility as your child's nursery to do what we can to help you create a good learning environment at home.

This does not mean that you need to go out and buy lots of resources or turn your home into a nursery. A Home Learning Environment is all about what parents DO with their children when they are at home with them. Therefore, the Home Learning Area on our website has been designed to help you with ideas for educational activities you can do at home.

The page will require a login so the activity ideas are only accessible to our current parents. Once the page goes live on the website parents will be informed and given a password. There will be a dedicated page for each of the four rooms in the nursery, and you will be able to select the relevant room for your child. You will then be taken to a page showing tabs for each of the seven learning areas covered by the EYFS: Physical; Personal, So-

cial & Emotional; Communication & Language; Literacy; Maths; Understanding the World; Expressive Art & Design. Each area of learning will have a list of approximately ten activity ideas for you to do at home with your child, and these will be regularly updated.

We have deliberately chosen activity ideas that do not require extensive or difficult resources to be found, and most early learning activities offer flexibility on the resources used anyway. We hope they are all easy to understand and follow, but if necessary you will find clarification for most online.

The Home Learning Area will also provide links to the EYFS and Development Matters documents, so that you can familiarise yourself with the framework for learning that all nurseries follow. There will also be a PDF version of our Parent Observation page available. I would encourage all parents to download a copy of this and occasionally use it when you do activities with your child at home. The pages can be added to your child's Learning Journey if you give them to us, and they provide us with a good insight into what your child is capable of doing when at home with you.

We hope you will find this new area useful, interesting and fun. We will let all parents know as soon as it has gone live.

“...the quality of a child's Home Learning Environment has a huge impact on their educational and health outcomes ...”

Garden Revamp

We are very excited to announce that at the end of June Carousel's garden will be completely revamped! The garden is around 20 years old now and it needs to be revitalized. The two overarching aims of the project are to bring more natural materials into the garden and to create more learning opportunities for the children to explore whilst they are playing outside.

The revamp will see everything in the current garden stripped away to give us a completely fresh start. We will be installing artificial grass with a track for the children to ride their bikes and scooters on. There will be a new sloped ramp from the back door into the garden and a new climbing tower installed in the centre of the garden.

As our outdoor space is not very big, we will be using the edges of the garden to install different features, in order to maximise learning opportunities whilst still giving the children plenty of

space to run around. Around the edges of the garden will be a bug hotel, planters, our existing mud kitchen, a sandpit, a water wall and an improved storage solution incorporating chalk board doors.

One exciting new installation in the garden will be a construction area where the children will be able to engage in woodwork using real tools. Staff will receive training on woodwork in early childhood education and parents will receive more information about this once the area is in use. Any parents who are interested to find out more in the meantime can visit Pete Moorhouse's website at www.irresistible-learning.co.uk.

We are very excited about our new garden, which we are sure the children will love. We are also very pleased to be able to invite parents in to see it at our Family Fun Picnics coming up in the summer.



Summer Events

We are so relieved, along with everybody else, that restrictions are easing and life can return to normal. At Carousel this means that from 21st June parents will be allowed back into the nursery and we can host some events for families, which will allow parents to meet each other and our practitioners.

Our first event will be a Parents' Evening on 7th July. Sheets with time slots will be put up in the foyer in June for you to select your slot. This year, Par-

ents' Evening will not be the social event it has been in the past, although some refreshments will be provided. Instead, it will be an opportunity for you to discuss your child's progress and development with their key person, much like Parents' Evenings at school.

Later in the summer parents and children will be invited into our garden for a Family Fun Picnic. These will be an opportunity for you to meet the staff in your child's room as well as other par-

ents in a relaxed and social environment.

The picnic for the upper nursery will be held on 24th July (morning for Rabbits and afternoon for Pre-school, also including graduation). The picnic for the lower nursery will be held on 14th August (morning for Ducklings and afternoon for Hedgehogs). Further details about these events will be announced shortly, and they are of course subject to Government restrictions being lifted.

Readiness for Pre-school

In September our current Rabbits will be moving up into the pre-school. Our nursery nurses focus very heavily on the children in our pre-school being independent and ready for school. This means that very quickly as children start in pre-school they need to be showing this independence. This means that children starting in our pre-school should:

- be fully able to use the toilet, possibly with some assistance with wiping. We do not have nappy changing facilities in the pre-school room.
- Be very close to dropping their nap, if they have not done so already.
- Be wearing our uniform. This is not compulsory, but we do encourage parents of our pre-school children to dress them in uniform to prepare them for uniform at school.





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[Early Learning for a Brighter Future](#)

Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-school is a family run business, established in 1992. We are a small nursery that provides a welcoming environment and an excellent standard of care for children aged 3 months to five years. We are situated in a specially modified bungalow in a quiet residential area of Billericay, and can accommodate 31 children each day. Our nursery is separated into a Lower and Upper nursery and consists of four rooms—one for each age group: Ducklings (3-18mths), Hedgehogs (18-28mths), Rabbits (28-36mths) and pre-school Squirrels (3-5yrs). We also have a lovely outside area with a range of suitable equipment for the children to explore and develop their motor skills. At Carousel we are constantly striving to provide an excellent quality of education because we believe in the importance of early learning for a brighter future.

Breakfast

We politely request that parents take note of when breakfast is served at Carousel. Breakfast is served at 8am, and any children who arrive between 8am and 8.30 will be offered breakfast.

In recent weeks we have had some children arriving after 8.30 who have not been given breakfast at home. We will of course give children breakfast

if they arrive at nursery hungry, but breakfast does need to have an end point to allow for our cook to clean up and begin preparing snack and lunch.

Please ensure that if you know your child will arrive at nursery after 8.30am, that you give them breakfast at home. Thank you.

