

Autumn Term Newsletter

We hope you all had a lovely summer and are enjoying the change of the seasons now. The autumn term is always a busy one at Carousel, and we have lots of exciting things planned for the next few months. We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter, and that the information it contains is both interesting and useful for you as parents.

Focus Article: Risk and Resilience

No doubt we can all recall conversations with parents or grandparents about things they did as kids that we would never dream of letting our children do. Playing out in the street until dark, climbing trees really high and hurtling on bikes down very steep hills. On the face of it such activities seem obviously dangerous, and things we shouldn't let our children do.

However, learning to understand **risk** and building **resilience** are fundamental to children's development. In 2015 a UK Parliamentary report entitled 'Play' suggested that child's play had become too safe, and it recommended that children should engage in more risky play. Children need to be challenged in their play, both physically and mentally. Children have an innate desire to push themselves physically, running that bit faster or jumping that bit further. Engaging in such play also allows a child to develop emotionally: it helps them to understand when feelings of fear indicate a potentially dangerous situation, but also teaches them how to balance that fear with excitement. It is the blend of these two feelings that give us *thrills*. Engaging in such play gives a child an appreciation of their own competence as they realise they can climb that high, go that fast or jump that far. It's entirely possible that they may get a few cuts and grazes along the way, or fail at something initially, but that is necessary for building their self esteem and resilience.

Resilience is so important for children's development that it actually forms part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Children with good resilience are able to stick at something, even when they fail. They bounce back after they make mistakes and have a can-do attitude to overcoming obstacles. We all need to experience failure to learn that we can overcome it. Resilient children will not necessarily

be overly independent, but will rely on adults to help them when needed. What children require from adults when it comes to resilience is to be given the freedom to fail, to be allowed to take a slight knock (be that physical or mental) and to be encouraged to realise that they can do something with practice, having learned from their mistakes.

The job of parents and early years practitioners is to provide a safe and secure environment that enables children to engage in risky play. This might mean taking your child on a forest walk and letting them climb trees, instead of getting that outdoors time at the playground designed with safety in mind. It could mean giving them a child-safe knife to help you cut up the vegetables for dinner. It could be as simple as letting them play outside in the garden with siblings, while you really aren't watching. With 5th November approaching, should parents follow official guidance and keep the bonfire roped off with their children well away? Or could they in fact allow them to help feed the fire in a supervised way that teaches them a proper respect for the flames?

This is a controversial topic. Today's society is very concerned with safety. You may have heard of 'helicopter parents' - parents who want to supervise every aspect of their child's life. There is undoubtedly pressure from others to be 'good' parents and keep children away from all harm. Official guidance seems to be solely concerned with health & safety and the removal of all risk. But studies have shown that engaging in risky play has immense benefits for children, both physically and emotionally. It is up to parents and practitioners to find that healthy balance, which keeps our children safe from harm, but teaches them the life lessons to ultimately do that for themselves.

Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-school

Issue 2

October 2020

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Nursery news

- Staffing – Amira Abbas left Carousel at the end of August after 4 years with us. In September we took on Lily Walker as a floating member of staff and Shannon McAlden began working for us on a permanent basis. Both hope to start their Level 3 apprenticeships in the New Year.
- In August we celebrated Ruth being at Carousel for ten years! She joined us straight out of school and over the decade has flourished into a senior nursery nurse and room leader. We are so grateful to Ruth for everything she does at Carousel, and she is much loved by all the staff, children and parents. One of our cooks, Jakki, celebrated being at Carousel for 21 years in October! That is quite a stint, and many, many hot dinners! We really appreciate her dedication to the team and all her hard work in the kitchen over the years.
- We have recently had some improvement works done in the garden. Our neighbours kindly agreed that we could use their garden as a fire exit route, so we have installed a door in one of the fence panels we share with them. This means we now have a safe exit route from the garden in the unlikely event of a fire.
- **Dates for your Diary:**
19th-23rd October—French Week!
Friday 30th October—Halloween dressing up day
9th-13th November—Children in Need week



Something new—Cultural Celebration Weeks

We are very excited to announce that this month we will be launching our Cultural Celebration Weeks. This will involve spending one week of each month celebrating a different culture, nationality or ethnicity. We will be linking the countries we choose to the nationalities/ethnicities of the children we have at Carousel. The idea is to teach the children what it would be like if they were growing up in that country, and how life might be different there. We will plan the whole week around the theme across the nursery, and hope to incorporate activities such as music, stories, dance, dress, food, religion, flags and language.

Our first celebration week is going to run from

19th-23rd October, and we will be starting with...

France! One of our dads at nursery is French and he has very kindly helped us by coming up with some fabulous ideas for the week. Each month we will contact the relevant parent to ask for their help and ideas, so if you have links to another country, you've been warned! We will also be inviting the parent into nursery during the week to help with an activity or give the children a little presentation. This is by no means compulsory, but we hope you might like to join in with our new idea.

We are very excited about this new initiative, and are very open to ideas about how we can improve it as the year goes on, so please give us feedback.

"...to teach the children what it would be like if they were growing up in that country..."

Something new—Nursery Reports

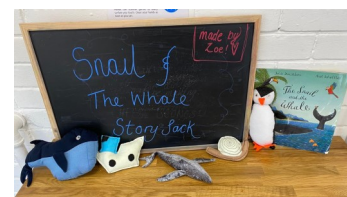
We had hoped that we might be able to hold our annual Parents' Evening this term, but it seems the continuing situation with the pandemic will unfortunately prevent us from doing so.

Instead, in November we will be sending home a short nursery report for each child. This will give you an idea about what your child has been learning at nursery, what areas they are showing strengths in and in which

areas they require a little more support.

Once a term we assess the children's development across the seven different learning areas of the EYFS. This will be done in October and will form the basis of the reports.

Once you have received your child's report, please contact Katharine if there is anything you would like to discuss, and we would be happy to arrange phone calls with your child's key person if you would like.



Maths & Phonics at Carousel

Katharine has recently started her Early Years Teacher Training course, and already there are new initiatives she wants to introduce at Carousel.

One of these is to 'make maths everywhere' at nursery. This means incorporating maths into conversations, activities and play wherever possible. We will begin by focusing on using maths at mealtimes, because they offer a surprising number of opportunities to discuss number and other mathematical concepts (shape, measure, colour etc). For example, the staff can ask questions such as 'How many plates do we need today?', 'Please take 3 carrots', 'Is this apple halved or quartered?'. These questions are of course more appropriate for our older children, but staff will also talk about the same concepts with the younger children, instead making statements and counting in front of them.

We would like to encourage you to do the same at home, by taking all the opportunities you can think of to talk about maths with your child. Maths is a subject that many children find difficult, often because they are told it is hard or that they are not very good at it. We want to encourage a love of maths at Carousel and hope to teach the children that it is fun, and that it is indeed all around us.

There are so many ways to incorporate maths into everyday life with children; once you start you'll be amazed!

We would also like to encourage the parents of our pre-school children to take home the phonics books we have at nursery, so that you can be working on your child's reading at home. Please ask Abbie or Sarah if you would like to borrow them.



Christmas Songs!

It's nearly that time of year again! We know there is a slightly dark cloud hanging over Christmas 2020, but we refuse to allow Christmas at Carousel to be cancelled! We will be throwing ourselves into it with as much vigour as we do every year. We don't know yet if we will be able to invite parents to our annual Christmas Concert—let's all hope

that we can. But even if we can't, we will still do a concert and will livestream it to you instead!

This means that our children will soon begin practicing the songs! That's right, at Carousel we start playing Christmas music even before the shops do. Be prepared for your child to start singing Jingle Bells (and many more) at home

soon, please encourage them and please help them to learn the words! We are sticking to more traditional songs this year, so it should be a little easier for everyone involved. We also hope to host our Christmas parties somehow and will give you more information about this nearer the time.

Covid-19: Self-isolation guidance

Since we issued our Covid-19 guidance at the start of June, the Test and Trace system has come into operation, and children have returned to school. We therefore want to clarify what needs to happen in terms of a child coming to nursery if somebody in that child's household is told to self isolate.

We are following the official

Government guidance on this, which at the time of going to print is: If a person in a child's household is told to self-isolate, the other members of that household do NOT need to self isolate. Therefore, in that scenario, your child could still come to nursery.

If, however, the person who has been told to self-isolate begins

to develop symptoms of Covid-19, then the whole household must go into isolation and the child would not be able to come to nursery.

We hope this is adequately clear, but please check online guidance or contact us if you have any questions.





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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.

Sleeping at nursery

Sleep is very important for young children, and we understand that many parents spend a lot of time trying to get their children into good sleeping and napping habits. Sleeping at nursery obviously presents a bit of a challenge, especially for new children, because it is an unfamiliar environment and there are other children around. Our nursery nurses understand the importance of sleep for a child's development, and also for their ability to enjoy their day at nursery. We will try our best to get children to sleep when they need to, but this must not be to the detriment of other children who are already asleep in the room, or to the detriment of that child if they are refusing to sleep. We ask parents to trust our ability to judge when a child does or doesn't need to sleep, and to give us flexibility away from the home routine where necessary.

We also want to take this opportunity to tell the parents of our pre-school children that after Christmas we will start phasing out naps for any pre-schoolers who still sleep during the day, in preparation for them starting school.

