

Summer Term Newsletter

We have decided to issue a fuller newsletter each term, and we hope you will find it both interesting and informative. This is our summer term newsletter, and we will issue the next autumn term one in late September/early October. We would encourage you to read our newsletter as it will contain important news and information about things happening at Carousel, and it is a useful way for us to communicate with you.

Focus Article: Summer-born children

In England summer-born children are those born between 1st April and 31st August. There are longstanding concerns about the educational attainment of summer-born children, compared to their peers born earlier in the school year. There is, however, limited evidence to prove they do fall behind their peers in terms of their development and schooling. This is partly because this could only be proven by conducting analysis of children's attainment across the country, across year groups, for the whole of their school careers. This would clearly be a huge undertaking. Much of the concern comes from parents who worry that their children are not ready to start school and will forever be playing catch-up.

Parents of summer-born children can request that their child starts school 'outside of their normal age group'. This means not just delaying their start date (which can see children starting later in Year 1 instead of Reception), but starting Reception a year later. Awareness amongst parents that they can make this re-

quest is growing, but the percentage of children who start school outside of their normal age group is very small (between 0.5% and 1%). The three biggest reasons why parents make this request are: feeling their child is not ready to start school; conducting research about summer-born children; advice from their child's nursery or pre-school.

In 2015 the Government amended the Schools Admission Code to strengthen the rights of parents to request when their child enters reception class. School admission authorities are increasingly willing to accept requests for delayed entry into Reception year, although the majority do require parents to make a case for delayed entry. The Government also encourages parents to speak to the admission authority before making a request. This is because schools can make provision for summer-born children and this could alleviate the concerns of many parents. If any parent wishes to discuss this issue further, please ask to speak to Katharine.

A reflection on re-opening

Carousel Day Nursery has been open every day for 28 years, and it was sad to see our nursery empty of children during the Covid-19 closure period. However, we put the time to good use and carried out a deep clean of the nursery, along with some essential maintenance, so that it was clean and fresh for the children's return.

It has been fantastic to be open again. We were so delighted to see the children return and be playing together again. The children were so pleased to

see their friends and are enjoying all the exciting things nursery has to offer.

Everything is going well from our perspective. We wanted nursery to seem as familiar to the children as possible, so we have not spoken much to them about the virus or the new procedures, apart from encouraging them to wash their hands often and thoroughly. The staff have got used to the new requirements, which are manageable, and are all very pleased to be back at work. We will continue to follow the Govern-

ment's guidance for as long as it is in place, but we hope that from now things will only relax as we return to normal. On that note, from the 20th July we are no longer required to keep the children in separate bubbles and will be easing this restriction. We will keep the children separated in their rooms as much as we can, but not where this places an unnecessary pressure on the logistical management of the nursery.

Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-school

Issue 1

20th July 2020

Contents

- Focus Article: Summer-born children
- A reflection on re-opening
- Nursery news
- 'Something new' section
- Nursery update
- Cooking & eating at Carousel
- Your views
- Room Settles

Nursery news

- Staffing – Jade Easterford has now left Carousel. Those children who had Jade as their key person have been told who their new key person is. We have employed Shannon McAlden as a temporary member of staff with a view to making her permanent in the near future. From September, Hayley and Ruth will be co-leading our Rabbit room, and Megan will move to the Hedgehog room as the room assistant.
- We will be making changes to our fee structure from 1st September 2020. Please see attached sheet.
- Buggy Store – You will hopefully have noticed the new buggy store at the front-left of the nursery, which we had built during our closure period. This is a brilliant use of wasted space that has given us some much needed storage room. Parents can leave their buggies in here securely if they wish. Please just ask a member of staff when you drop off and they will give you the key.
- Ten children from our pre-school will be leaving to start school in September. We always miss our children when they leave us, but we wish them and their parents all the best for when they start at big school. We had a lovely graduation party and a little ceremony on 7th July to give them a good send off!



Something new—the Garden

Just before we closed in late March, we appointed Sarah as our Outdoor Co-ordinator. Sarah's job is to help all staff to utilise our outdoor space, by giving them activity ideas and encouraging them to be really creative with the area. Sarah has made a folder full of fantastic ideas for outdoor activities, which all the staff can use to plan their garden time. Summer is the perfect time for children to get outdoors and we are allocating each room at least two hours per day in the garden. When out in the garden they spend lots of time running around, engaging in water play, enjoying story time, playing with the bikes and getting stuck into fun new activities like water painting and slide painting. The staff also take the children on

walks in the local area, which they really enjoy. One of Sarah's new initiatives is to get the children doing the Daily Walk. This aims to get children more active in order to promote good mental and physical wellbeing. We are encouraging the staff to get the children moving around the garden for 15 minutes, by running, dancing, hopping, skipping, jumping etc. This makes it fun for the children, gets their heart rate up and works on their gross motor skills. We have also just purchased a tunnel and parachute for more fun games in the garden, which we are sure the children will love.

"Summer is the perfect time for children to get outdoors"

Something new—Toilet Training

We are going to be phasing out the use of potties at Carousel. This is primarily because we are concerned about them being unhygienic. It is not always possible for our staff to properly wash out a potty because they cannot always get to a sink if they are looking after children. Therefore, the potty is often wiped with disinfectant, which we do not feel is sufficiently hygienic. In addition, we don't need to use potties at Carousel because we deliberately invested in child size toilets for

our bathroom to help the children feel safe and confident on the toilet. They are the perfect height and size for young children. We will therefore be encouraging all children who are toilet training to use the toilet instead of a potty. We will of course keep a potty in a cupboard in the bathroom for any child who really refuses to use the toilet. If any parent wants to discuss this with us, please give us a call and we will happily talk you through our reasoning.



Nursery update

We were very nicely surprised by how quickly all of our children settled back into the nursery. The younger children only took about a week or two to feel comfortable again with the staff and environment, and the older children were so excited to be back from day one!

The staff have been doing some brilliant activities with the children, and hopefully you are following our Facebook and Instagram updates to see the pictures every week. We are always trying to be innovative and creative to keep the children engaged and promote their development, plus ensure they have lots of fun too!

All the children who will be in the Hedgehog room from September have

been given a soft photo book, which we have asked parents to fill with pictures of their family. We would be really grateful if you could do this and bring it back to nursery. The children love seeing pictures of their family, friends, pets etc when they are at nursery, and it is particularly helpful when they are settling into nursery or a new room. We will also be giving one to all of our new Ducklings when they start with us.

In September all of our children (except some in the pre-school) will be moving up to the next room. The staff will do the usual handovers for this, but we will no longer be doing room settles (please see back page story). All parents will be informed shortly of who their child's new key person is.



Cooking and Eating at Carousel

Since we re-opened, our Rabbits and pre-schoolers have been doing lots and lots of cooking! They have made bagel pizzas, cakes, frozen yogurt bites and even bread rolls to go with their soup! The children really enjoy getting stuck in with making the food, and they are very keen to eat the food they have made themselves.

We have also been very encour-

aged that the children are happily eating all of the meals on our new menus, which we updated early in the new year. We always keep our menus under review, so if a particular meal is not going down well we can adapt or replace it, and we like to keep them fresh with new seasonal recipes where we can.

Our menus are available on our website, and there is always a

new one up in the foyer every week. We have now stopped detailing what each child eats on the daily sheets we send home as this was taking the staff too long to write out. We now tell you if your child has eaten 'well', 'fine' or 'not so well'. This refers to the main meals (which you can see on the menu) and the staff will always speak to you if they have any concerns about a child's eating.



Your views

We would appreciate your views on taking the children on day trips to local attractions, as a special treat for the children and staff during the year. This of course is not something we intend to do in the near future because of the Covid-19 restrictions, but is something we would look to do once life is back to normal and we could easily organise an outing. We used to do one or two trips a year at Carousel, but parent interest in them seemed to dwindle so they stopped. We always look to do something that is good value

for money, but of course a trip would incur an additional cost for parents. In the past we have visited Audley End, Tropical Wings and Colchester Zoo, among others. We would be open to ideas for places to go, and wouldn't like to travel too far. Could you please let a member of staff know what your thoughts are on this (including if they are negative!) at drop off or pick up? That will help us to get a feel for what parents think and then we will know whether this is an idea we should explore. Thank you.

"...day trips to local attractions, as a special treat for the children and staff..."



Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-school Ltd

32 Thynne Road
Billericay
Essex
CM11 2HH

Phone: 01277 632362
Mobile: 07436272259
Email: info@carouselnursery.net
www.carouselnursery.net

[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.

Room Settles

In the past we have organised room settles at this time of year in preparation for the children to move up to the next room in September. However, we won't be doing this anymore because we don't feel that the children benefit from it enough to justify the great logistical effort involved in organising the settles. It is also not in accordance with Government guidelines to move the children around the nursery at the moment.

As we are such a small nursery, our children are familiar with all the members of staff and with the rooms in the nursery, most of which have to be walked through to get to the garden. We therefore don't think it is helpful to organise a settle for a child for just a couple of hours in the new room, with children they do not know and will not be with when they move up. We think all the children will fare better if they move to the new room with all their friends and we are confident they will quickly get used to their new surroundings.

If any parent wishes to talk to us about this, please don't hesitate to give us a call.

