



Dear Parents,

We hope you all had a good Christmas break and would like to thank you for the lovely cards and gifts we received. We would also like to offer a warm welcome to those of you whose children are joining us this term.

As you know, Linda left at the end of last term and we (Amy and Vicky) are job-sharing the manager's role. Between the two of us, we cover the week and there is an 'open door policy' at the beginning of each session for **brief** conversations if you wish to speak to us. If you feel you want a little longer please arrange an appointment. You can also chat to your child's key person.

We shall be using the theme **Toys and Games** to address the various areas within our pre-school curriculum during this term. Please take a look at the *Planning Web* in the lobby and on our website <http://www.littlepippins.org.uk/> Each term there will be a core selection of story and information books chosen primarily for pleasure but also to support the ideas we are trying to develop in all areas of the revised EYFS curriculum. There is a list below in case you want to follow these up with trips to the library.

Communication and language and Literacy We will continue to offer play-based activities that encourage children to recognise signs and words and to begin to mark-make for a purpose. These will include book making, creating stories and making signs for the pre-school. Older children will be learning phonics using the Jolly Phonics system. This term we will be looking at sounds of the sea using STAPIN and the fun actions that accompany each sound.

As well as our regular home corner, there will be a puppet theatre and toyshop to encourage communication and negotiating skills.

Personal, social and emotional development We will continue to explore feelings and emotions using our puppets and will cover ideas about *turn-taking, being kind and how does it feel when..?* We will use puppets and stories to cover subjects such as hand washing and dressing skills and we will continue to spend time talking about taking care of our bodies, healthy food and the effect exercise has on us. During the pre-school year the children look at various cultures and celebrations. This term they will be learning about the Chinese New Year.

Mathematical development Board games, dominoes and dice will be used to extend and reinforce counting, addition and subtraction skills and number recognition. We shall also use sand, water and rice to measure and investigate capacity. The puppet theatre and toyshop will provide opportunities for the children to develop their understanding of money exchange and begin to recognise some coins.

Understanding the world We shall be looking at **Toys and Games** for a variety of purposes. The children will be encouraged to think about and discuss how various toys work. For example, batteries, remote control, springs, push and pull, clockwork etc.

Physical development The children will be *going on a bear hunt* in the garden to explore both movement and positional language - as well as to find a bear! As part of our Chinese New Year celebrations, they will have the opportunity to participate in a dragon dance and make their own music to dance to. During our focus music and movement time we will be working on spatial awareness, listening and responding to patterns in music and moving using different parts of the body. With the older children we will be focusing particularly on using a tripod pencil grip and refining scissor skills.

Expressive art and design The children will be able to make music using various instruments. We shall be making our own puppets, props, programmes and tickets for our puppet theatre. We shall be making wheeled vehicles with Duplo, Lego and Sticklebricks as part of our investigation into how things work and a Fishing game to support mathematical understanding.

Parental help

Thank you for all the help we received last term. We look forward to having parents in to help again this term.

We appreciate that many of you work or have younger children to care for. However, if you are free to help either on a regular basis or just occasionally, we would be delighted to see you. We would also be happy to have the support of grandparents and carers. There is a list of dates on the whiteboard outside. If you are daunted by the idea of coming in for a whole session or not knowing what you will be asked to do, you can sign up for short periods and particular tasks. For example, coming in to wash the paint brushes or sharpen pencils would be a tremendous help.

Parent's questionnaire

Thank you to those of you who have returned questionnaires. We will be sharing the results with the committee in the very near future. However, for those of you who haven't yet responded, there is still time. Please ask for a questionnaire from the office or download a copy from our website <http://www.littlepippins.org.uk/>

Outside activities

We try to go outside whatever the weather and, as it is particularly cold and wet at the moment, your child will need named wellies and warm coats. If your child comes into pre-school in boots, please send in some indoor shoes.

Learning Journals

On the radiator top by the kitchen you will find your child's individual *Learning Journal* which is compiled by your child's key person in collaboration with you and your child. As your child's most important and prime educator we value your input. For example a note of the first time your child fastens his/her shoes, dresses unaided or rides his/her bike without stabilisers are all useful

contributions. Please feel free to access these journals at any time whilst respecting the privacy of other children's *Learning Journals*. There is a pocket on the display board above the *Learning Journals* for your contributions. You may also email contributions to littlepippins@btinternet.com

Over the term we are going to be setting up an online learning journal called Tapestry. This online system will capture the children's experiences as well as monitor development and learning. You will be able to log on and view what has happened during the week through photos, observations and even video clips. You will also be able to comment on what you see and add your own observations. We are all very excited about using the new system and can't wait to get it up and running.

Health and Safety

Please drive very slowly in the car park and do not park in the disabled/emergency vehicle space.

Unfortunately it is that time of year when there are lots of bugs around. Please remember that children must be off 48 hours after their last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

Please recycle materials by bringing them in to enhance the following areas

Box modelling/creative work

- Kitchen roll tubes (not toilet rolls)
- Small boxes/cartons
- Clean milk bottle tops
- Bits of ribbon/string/wool/felt/lace
- Wrapping paper/tissue paper/wallpaper
- Christmas cards/wrapping paper etc

Please note that all box modelling must be gluten and nut free.

Mark-making

- Old calendars
- Diaries
- Note books
- Post its
- Envelopes
- Other unwanted items of stationary

Books

- The Enormous Turnip – Traditional tale
- The Little Red Hen – Traditional tale
- We're Going on a Bear Hunt – Michael Rosen
- This is the Bear – Sarah Hayes
- The Winter Bear – Ruth Craft & Eric Bledgrav

Amy, Vicky and the team

