



COA Newsletter

Chelsea Open Air Nursery School and Children's Centre
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ARTS AMBASSADORS



A small group of children joined Kathryn, Michelle and Belinda to demonstrate their poetry skills at Kensington Town Hall with Philip Wells - the Fire Poet who often works with us. Lara, Mylah, Rayan, Hannah, Sofia Pecce, Sofia Del Monte and Maximilian created a poem entitled 'Helping'. The Arts Festival, organised by the Royal Borough, enabled school staff to meet a range of Arts organisations and individual artists, with the intention of developing partnerships in the future.

SIGN UP FOR THE TRAFFIC CLUB

Boris Johnson and Transport for London have set aside funding to enable 3-4 year old children to benefit from a programme of road safety. The Children's Traffic Club (CTC) is a free programme of books and resources designed to reduce child casualties and

provide children with life skills for their future safety and well-being. If you are interested visit www.TrafficClub.org You will shortly be hearing more about it at COA!



LOOKING AFTER OUR NEIGHBOURS

We appreciate that we have limited space outside the nursery building for you, as parents and carers, to wait when you are dropping off and collecting your children from nursery. We would however ask that you do not sit on the walls of neighbouring gardens or use their bins, and in so doing help us to remain on good terms with all our neighbours.

MOTOR SKILLS HAMPER LEARNING

Research evidence going back to 2004 is suggesting that young children's motor skills on entry to school are less mature than they used to be.

Sally Goddard Blythe from the Institute for Neuro-Physiological Psychology describes them as "*children who are five-year-olds on the outside but three-year-olds in terms of their motor skills on the inside.*"



Our children at COA are lucky as their free-flow access to outdoor play gives them the space and opportunity to develop better balance, control and co-ordination. This in turn leads to improvements in their concentration, self-esteem and confidence, as well as improved gross and fine-motor skills.

Sally goes on to suggest that this under development in balance and co-ordination, which is likely to affect their ability to sit still, use a pencil to write and postural control for reading, results from babies not getting enough "tummy time" to help them develop their upper body



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strength. She adds that babies who spend too much time being carried or in baby seats where they cannot change their body position and move enough to develop their reflexes and motor skills, are laying down problems for the future.

Interestingly the recently published UK Physical Activity Guidelines for the Early Years (2011) make the argument clear: *"there is emerging evidence that sedentary behaviour in the early years is associated with overweight and obesity as well as lower cognitive development"*

The guidelines point out that for just 40 minutes a day, young children's health would improve greatly. 20 minutes at nursery and 20 minutes at home spread across the day is all that is required.

However, it is not only about providing the opportunities for physical play; we know some children are wary of the garden and become resistant to outdoor play as the weather becomes less welcoming. The National Children's Bureau found that children are much more active when adults are active too. If we just "supervise" they do not see good role-models, but if we participate then they

join in more too. So more trips to the park, walking or scooting to nursery, going for a family swim, will all help your child be both healthier and learn more effectively.

CONGRATULATIONS



Chelsea Open Air and its budding gardeners are again winners! Well done to Sharon and Claire for leading both the nursery school children and children's centre to such golden and silver results with the London Children's Flower Society and London in Bloom!



LIKELY STRIKES

There are highly likely to be strikes at the end of November, by a variety of unions with members in schools such as COA. As I will be recovering from my knee operation I will not be involved, but I wanted to

express my thoughts on the subject, as I feel it is crucial that parents and carers understand the issues and why staff may this time be considering the unthinkable and striking for a day.

I have gone through some profound soul searching on the matter of striking. My mother brought my sister and me up understanding that women had died so we could vote, so I always vote, but increasingly I wonder does it really make a difference? It is now my considered opinion that despite never striking before, this is a defining moment in history for school staff and my traditional moderate views would lead me to strike this time, not for myself but for younger colleagues who face unprecedented cuts in their pensions in the future.

Please let me assure you that anyone who chooses to strike from the COA staff is not an impressionable professional who has been manipulated by self-interested, left-wing agitators. Rather they are a reflective staff member whose considered decision is that striking is a last resort in trying to protect one of the few benefits of being a teaching or a member of the



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support staff, making a difference to children's learning, well-being and care, every day. Everyone here has a reluctance to go on strike, especially when it makes life even harder for families who know and trust us, but perhaps the sight of such folk taking this action may for once give a very powerful message to the public about the sad situation of state education today and how its greatest resource are being treated.

Hence I for one as Head will be casting my vote as YES in my forthcoming union ballot and I am proud to tell you so!



PARENT/KEYWORKER

MEETINGS - 31ST October

Please sign-up on the sheets in the children's entrance area for an appointment to meet with your child's keyworker and discuss your child's progress.



WE WANT YOUR JUNK!

Please continue to bring in empty cardboard boxes, tubes, bottle tops, ribbons, wrapping paper and anything else that you think the children may enjoy reusing in the making area; but no glass items please.

The holiday club will be attempting to create a large scale model, so please start collecting now.



BOX TOPS FOR BOOKS

We are now collecting Box Top tokens from Nestle cereals, to help grow the books in our library. Please hand any tokens in to the school office.



REMEMBER!

Please continue to use our home loan scheme, to borrow books, science boxes, maths games, EAL story-sacks and much more! If you would like any help with how to use the loan scheme, please ask Lesley.

WAITING OUTSIDE AND PUSH-CHAIRS

We politely remind everybody that parents or carers need to wait outside the main nursery doors when collecting their children. Any visitors inside COA need to sign in and out via the office. This helps us to ensure that we know who is in the building at all times, for fire safety and safeguarding purposes. Please also remember that scooters, pushchairs and buggies should be left outside at your own risk. Many thanks for your cooperation.



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FAMILY LEARNING

This term we will be running a series of Family Learning workshops for parents and children to learn together. Our first session 'Fun with Dough' will run on Tuesday 18th Oct at 9:15am and will be repeated on Thursday 20th October at 1:15pm. The first part of the session is for parents only, then the children join us and we put into practice what we have learnt. For more information please speak to Claire.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT MAKERS COURSE

COA is hosting a 4 week course for parents and children; you will learn to sing songs/rhymes together which will be recorded onto CD. For more information please talk to Claire.



RIGHT TO PLAY

800 children from 4 local schools, including Chelsea Open Air Nursery School, participated in a joint art project on 12th July to raise funds for the charity Right to Play and their own schools. This was headed up by parents Pip & Tanya, assisted by many parents and teachers and was a tremendous success financially and as an art project. Each child created their own art work and it was displayed at the Royal College of Art, perhaps a once in a lifetime unique opportunity for many of the children to see their own work on display.

All the parents and children present from COA were extremely proud to see their pictures on display. Judges included the artist Sacha Jafry and writer Jeffery Archer and everyone was particularly delighted when the judges selected a painting by Jelena from COA as the most innovative picture.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thurs Oct 20th:
Governors meeting 6:15p.m.
Observers welcome.

Mon Oct 24th-Fri Oct 28th:
Half term; holiday club places available

Mon Oct 31st:
Parent meetings with key workers by appointment

Thurs Nov 3rd:
Enjoy and Achieve course -
CD Makers (4 sessions) 2-3pm

Tues Dec 6th:
Enjoy and Achieve course -
First Aid for Babies and Infants (with crèche)

Fri Dec 16th:
Last day of term
All part timers attend 9-11:30a.m.
All full timers attend 9-1p.m. No COA+ p.m.

Mon 19th-Thurs 22nd:
Christmas Holiday Club