



COA Newsletter

CHELSEA OPEN AIR NURSERY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE,
51 GLEBE PLACE, LONDON. SW3 5JE
Tel: 020 7352 8374 Fax: 020 7376 8350
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PUNCTUALITY MATTERS:

Arriving on time makes a real difference to your child's play and learning as being late can make it harder for them to settle as the other children are settled in learning and playing already. Please remember that all children are expected on site by 15 minutes after their usual starting time. After that arrivals are marked Late and such records are passed on to your child's primary school. We report attendance and punctuality on your child's leaver's report and many schools expect this to be as positive as possible so please be prompt! Phone us if your child is ill too please.

WELCOME:

September 2011 Volume 15 Number 1

A very warm welcome to all our new children and families and welcome back to our established families too. We hope you had a grand summer whatever you were doing.



WALK, DON'T RIDE:

We have noticed we have several children who are coming to nursery in buggies. Please start to get them walking, scooting or riding their bike to help their developmental growth and fitness.



APPLICATIONS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL RECEPTION CLASSES:

The next round of admissions started on September 1st. Parents of children born between 1.09.07 to 31.08.08 will need to apply for a reception place in primary

school to start from September 2012. Booklets and forms will be available from the office at COA soon. However, the government are both keen to encourage parents to apply for primary and secondary school places online.

We are well aware that not all families have access to a computer and the Internet. Some may also be concerned about the skills required to complete such a form. Hence we will be providing workshop/help sessions soon here at COA in order that you can complete your child's form online.

CHILDREN'S BOOK FORTNIGHT:

From September 26th we will be celebrating books through a focus on traditional tales. On Friday October 7th we are inviting children to dress up as their favourite story book character. The staff will have a surprise that day too!



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The views of contributors expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the school.



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to us to help buy books for our library.



PLEASE REMEMBER:

- YOUR CHILD NEEDS A COAT/JACKET EACH DAY TO PLAY OUTSIDE IN ALL WEATHERS.
- PLEASE REMEMBER A COMPLETE CHANGE OF NAMED CLOTHES FOR YOUR CHILD TOO.
- PLEASE TELL US IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER.
- Please bring in a photo of your child's family or a photo of something they did during the summer holidays for a display.
- Please bring in recycled materials for the children to create with in the making area. No toilet rolls or egg boxes please. Ensure containers are clean and suitable for young children too please.
- Please collect Nestle Books for Schools tokens from cereal boxes and give them

PERFORM BURSARY:

The Perform Bursary Scheme can provide free performing arts places from September 2011- September 2012.

Applications are invited from parents/carers of 4-8 year olds of children who might be constrained from attending these classes by financial constraints. The children who may best benefit may be:

- Shy and unconfident
- Confident but unfocussed
- Gifted and talented in the performing arts

More information can be obtained from

enquiries@perform.org.uk

CHILDMINDER VACANCIES

One of our parents, Sonya, is a registered childminder and currently has vacancies. For more information, please call Sonya on 07810 400702.

HOME TIME TANTRUMS:

Sometimes when children first start nursery they don't want to go home at the end of their session. It just seems that they cannot bear to finish playing with their friends and parents and carers end up feeling very embarrassed. This is a very challenging time for young children as they first break free of the apron strings of home and they can find it hard to communicate how they are feeling. Hence the tantrum is a way of showing they are scared, cross, upset or just plain confused! Young children have great difficulty understanding the passage of time and hence live in the present. Hellos and goodbyes are challenging for both the child and the adult so it helps to prepare them gradually. Hence our story groups are a change from the play/learn routine of the session and act as a calm down and also build up a sense of the passage of time by creating a



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routine so we can say that Mummy or whoever will soon be here.

Sometimes choosing a book bag or home loan resource also helps to reassure children they will come back again soon. Families can also help the child with a calendar of pictures to explain the weekend or holidays with a count-down of sleeps until nursery re starts. Adding other activities and events also help them build up their understanding and cope with challenging feelings. Talk with your child about what they will do with you and others so they are better prepared and hence grow more adaptable.



WHEN IS THE BEST AGE TO SEND CHILDREN TO SCHOOL?

Compulsory school ages vary enormously worldwide. In the Netherlands, New Zealand and Australia it is five, in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic,

France and Spain it is six and in Sweden, it is seven. Here in England children are now starting school in Reception as just four year olds. Is this wrong? Is this applying too much pressure on young minds? Are children really ready? There is no one or easy answer to these questions but there is evidence that whilst some children never look back some struggle for all their school days. The optimum age in theory used to be five-and-a-half in Britain, but six-and-a-half in the US. The ages of three to six are recognised across the world as a developmental stage and are treated with specialist provision in such provision as kindergarten, nursery school or pre-school.

Interestingly in some countries such as Hungary, German-speaking Switzerland, and French-speaking Belgium if children don't seem ready for school by the end of kindergarten, the teachers and parents are permitted to allow the child to stay an extra year in kindergarten.. This seems wise, rational and humane. It is also feasible here in England as the law still states that children do not need to be in

formal schooling until the term after their fifth birthday. However, if you do try to do this it is highly likely that your child will then miss the Reception class and go straight into the much greater formality of Year One. Some children are not ready for even the Reception class which continues to build upon the curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage at present and thus some will struggle with socialising confidently with their peers, using language competently and also possessing the fine-motor skills to write, use scissors, paint etc. However, the huge amount of focus and control required for the latter takes time, practice and patience and builds upon the gross motor skills of whole body climbing, running, balancing and generally co-ordinating your body through space. Remember there are also other big differences in the move to Reception class with a far less child friendly adult ratio and if your child has a birthday in August they may also be much smaller, less physically strong and physically ably as their peers. So consider if the school is ready



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for your child when you visit rather than the other way round. Consider how independent they are in getting dressed, coping with personal hygiene and putting on their shoes.

- Can they speak clearly and engage with adults to ask for help?
- Can they share and play kindly with other children as well as take some responsibility for their own belongings?
- Can they hold a pencil correctly, draw simple shapes, and write their name?
- Can they hop, skip and jump?
- If not consider carefully the repercussions and devastating effects on their self-images and progress if going into Reception?
- Could all this be about a cheaper option for children than the more expensive ratios of high quality nursery school education?



HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN-THE FIVE A DAY FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT:

Recent research about the difference parenting can make on young children's learning has shown that "Children do better when they have a close and positive relationship with their parents, and mothers and fathers work together to provide warm, authoritative, responsive, positive and sensitive parenting." DfE/DoH 2011 Families in the Foundation Years: Evidence Pack.

There are several areas which are essential for children to grow into happy, capable adults:

- Love and warmth
 - Talking and listening
 - Guidance and understanding
 - Limits and boundaries
 - Consistency and consequences
 - A structured and secure world.
- This is conveyed as five key benefits:
- A nutritious diet to aid development
 - Adopting positive attitudes and praising children frequently

- Talking with your child for 20minutes each day with the television off
- Play with your child on the floor for 10minutes each day
- Read to your child for 15minutes each day



MOTIVATIONAL SAYINGS:
"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavour."

Vince Lombardi

"Dreams are the seeds of creation. Action is the water that grows dreams into reality." Mark Madson
"The bamboo which bends is stronger than the oak which resists." Japanese proverb.
"Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it." Lou Holtz



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FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING:

A review of recent evidence about well-being suggests that the five following actions can make a real difference to our everyday lives:

- Connect-with people around you. At home, school or in your local community build links to these cornerstones which enrich and support our everyday lives.
- Be active-go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game, dance or exercise in a way that suits your level of mobility and fitness.
- Take notice by being curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons and weather. Savour the moment and reflect upon your experiences with others.
- Keep learning-by trying something new,

rediscovering an old interest. Sign up for a course. Take on a new responsibility. Fix something, learn to knit or sew. Set yourself a challenge you will enjoy!

- Give-Do something nice for a friend, colleague or stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a group and see the rewards.

Evidence shows the power of positive psychology helps us stay fresh and have a potency to keep us happy and positive. So forget the winter blues, the economic situation or your worries for a while and go out and do something good for you!



EARLY LEARNING IN SCHOOL SOME PERSONAL THOUGHTS-TOO MUCH TOO SOON?

Writing as someone who grew up in the countryside without a television or a car until the age

of ten I sound like a dinosaur, but as someone who went to school at the ripe old age of five I am increasingly considering myself as a privileged child. As of this September young children who would previously have stayed to enjoy developmentally appropriately paced learning in our nursery are starting in the Reception classes of local primary schools. Whilst Reception classes are generally excellent and continue to follow a primarily early years learning style of provision many families forget that the adult/child ratio these children experience in Reception is much lower than that in nursery classes and schools. Hence, this makes us more expensive and in times of austerity this appears as a subtle opportunity to move young children into Reception earlier than before to save money!

My fears also include the "testing for tots" agenda which again is creeping quietly in with new progress checks for two year olds and the clear focus on "school readiness." The new curriculum, due to come into force next year in 2012 in response to the Tickell



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Review of the Early Years Foundation Stage has slimmed the learning goals from 69 to 17 which is an improvement. Young children will learn in three prime areas-personal, social and emotional development; communication and language and physical development and four "specific areas" instead of the current six. The argument being that this will ensure that *"children are ready and able to learn at school."*

Whilst I agree fully with phrases such as *"children need resilience, confidence and personal skills"* and with the reduction in bureaucracy I am very concerned about the concept of *"school readiness"* and what it will look like in reality. I would prefer the phrase *"life readiness"* as nursery school education has always had as its main aim. There is a huge danger of top down pressure of the removal of the crucial aspects of each child's unique learning styles, dispositions, schema and attitudes, outdoor play, creative thinking and problem solving being eradicated by a statutory framework which forgets that play is a child's work. There is also a huge

danger for children whose developmental pathway which is different in that they may well be left behind as each child develops at their own unique rate and as we know boys and summer born children generally need more time to mature. So keep your eyes and ears open as success or failure labels may be starting sooner than I would wish.



CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES ON THEIR DAILY ROUTINE:

Friends, grown-ups and play are three common themes of children's views about their day at nursery. Further consultation has revealed themes about food, outside and creativity. Research by the National Children's Bureau in 2010 built upon previous research in 2003 by Elfer, Goldschmied and Selleck which demonstrated that young children attending nursery at different times were often confused and upset as to when

they will be collected and which meal comes next. We are often asked *"Am I staying for lunch today?"* and as snack and meal times are some children's favourite times of day it is important that both families and staff explain these different daily routines clearly particularly with the 15 hour provision. If the child's routine is very different day to day then their friendships can suffer and they can feel less secure. Thus as adults we all must consider the child's view as paramount and do our utmost to explain the pattern of each day to support and reassure them. Also being on time for delivery and collection is important so each child can start to play with their peers and not sit worrying when everyone else has gone home and they are left alone with staff looking after them and distracting them from their fears.

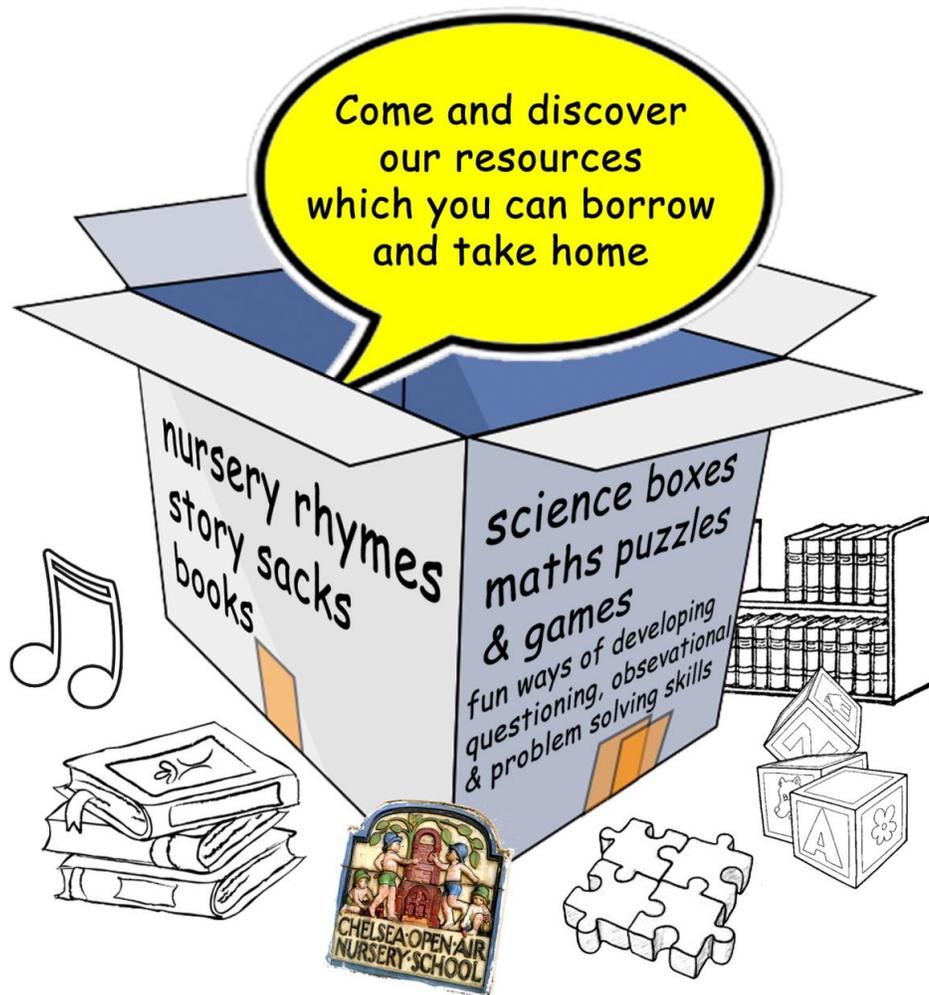


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CHELSEA OPEN AIR HOME LOAN

Come and discover
our resources
which you can borrow
and take home



it's really easy!

choose a resource > sign it out > take it home > enjoy it together
have fun > bring it back soon > sign it back in

please ask any member of staff for more details

P.A.C.T. parents and children together scheme



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SIMPLE GAMES/IDEAS TO PLAY WITH YOUR CHILD TO SUPPORT EYE-CONTACT AND COMMUNICATION:

- Peek-a-boo with a blanket to hide behind. Let them lead as well as you.
- Tickle
- Running and chase games
- Tug of war
- Swinging and jumping
- Eating at a table together
- Playing turn taking and catch games looking at one another
- Remember to pay attention to what your child has to say to you and have conversations with him/her even before they can talk to build self-esteem.
- Encourage independence with finger foods, spoon feeding and self-care by talking them through the actions as they perform them thus modelling the language

- Encourage choice making between two options over food, clothes or activities to develop their sense of identity and responsibility.
- Talk to your child about feelings and help them understand what makes them happy, sad, angry etc.
- Around the age of four encourage them to help with simple household chores.
- Use lots of praise and build their resilience to keep on trying! These are skills for life!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Mon Sept 12th: Children's Centre groups start.
New starters start to come in.
Established children return.
Sept 26th- Oct 7th Children's Book Fortnight
Sat Oct 1st: Dad's group with baby massage (First Saturday of every month)
Fri Oct 7th: Dress up as your favourite story book character

Mon Oct 3rd: Black History Month starts
Thurs Oct 20th 6:15p.m: Governors meeting. Observers welcome.
Mon Oct 24th-Fri Oct 28th HALF TERM HOLIDAY-COA + HOLIDAY CLUB PLACES AVAILABLE TO BOOK
Mon Oct 31st: Parent meetings with key workers by appointments
Thurs Nov 3rd: Enjoy and Achieve course-Creativity
Thurs Nov 19th-Creativity course 2.
Thurs Nov 17th: Creativity 3
Thurs Nov 24th: Creativity 4
Fri Dec 16th: End of term with all part timers from 9-11:30a.m. Full timers until 1p.m. No COA+ p.m.
Mon 19th-Thurs 22nd: Christmas Holiday Club