

Out of the Pot!

Paint Pots Nursery Newsletter **Summer 2024**

Summer already! We can't quite believe where the first part of this year has gone but time does fly when you have so much to do and we have been really busy. Our family grew in April, as we were delighted to welcome Bitterne preschool to our group and thanks to the hard work of many we were able to open within a few weeks. We can now say a big welcome to our new families and staff at Paint Pots Bitterne. You may have seen some new additions to some of your nurseries as we have been redecorating indoors and redeveloping some of our outside areas since January, with more to come during the rest of the year. Some children were particularly interested in the equipment used to refresh the outdoor areas so don't be surprised if you have had a few conversations about diggers over the last few weeks. We have had three Ofsted inspections and one registration visit since our last newsletter and we are immensely proud of all our teams who continue to work so hard, providing love, care, support and learning opportunities for all the children in our care.

Transitions

We are in the privileged position of having the responsibility of nurturing your children during their time at Paint Pots and being able to share in their life experiences as they grow. Whilst this is usually a wonderful experience, the summer period is also one of mixed emotions as we must say goodbye to so many of our children, either because they are moving to different rooms within the nursery or because they are leaving Paint Pots to begin their journey at big school. Although we talk about school transition, the work that we do and advice we share is applicable to all children going through a period of transition.

Starting school or moving to a new room is an exciting time for young children and their parents, but it can also be daunting. With a little preparation and encouragement, we can reduce anxiety and most children will settle more easily into their new environment.

For school leavers, attending nursery and preschool will have helped to develop the social and practical skills they need to succeed at school. They will be more used to spending time away from their primary carers for extended periods, mixing with children of their own age and from differing backgrounds, they will have had practice taking instructions from and communicating with adults, taking some responsibility for tasks such as tidying up and looking after their own belongings.

It is not a requirement for children to be able to read, write or do sums before they start school and many schools have requested that nurseries and preschools avoid teaching schemes like phonics in a particular way so that children are better able to grasp the individual phonics scheme that the school follows. Paint Pots believes in fostering a lifelong love of learning and this may involve elements of literacy and maths but typically this will be introduced in a manner that is less formal than school teaching.



Do not be concerned if you believe your child is starting school at a different stage of development than others. Children start school with a wide range of abilities and their teacher will be skilled at helping children progress at a pace that is comfortable to them. **What is most important is that you and your child have fun together whilst they attend nursery and preschool.**

Sharing stories, singing songs, playing games and talking about anything and everything are some of the ways that you can help your child's development. A big part of early education is about building confidence and resilience in order to prepare your children for the challenges of life.



It is a good idea to talk to your child about starting school to ensure they are familiar with the idea of change. With this in mind, we will be doing everything we can to make sure that the children meet their teacher and if possible, visit the school before starting. We will replicate this process for those moving within the nursery as we will organise settling sessions where the children will get to meet their new key person and familiarise themselves with their new room.

We will also ask the children to think about what it will be like and what they are most looking forward to. This is

also a good opportunity to talk about things they may be unsure or worried about and to seek to give them reassurance- something that you could try too although it is important not to push too hard if they don't want to talk. Treating the transition in a matter-of-fact way rather than focusing on the "big step ahead" will help soothe an anxious child. You could look at the school's brochure or website together and talk about the pictures. If they seem anxious about school, try focusing on the things they'll like best – maybe the sandpit, playhouse or new friends.

It's natural for parents to feel nervous about their child transitioning to school or a new room, but remember that your child can easily pick up on your emotions. Try to be relaxed and positive, rather than showing your own nerves. Remember that we are here to help and will gladly offer support and advice if you need it, so please do come and speak to us.

Funding

The new government funding for 2 year olds has made a difference to some of you and we encourage anyone eligible to apply for the 9 month old funding from September to continue to do this, even though, with a general election imminent, we don't know what the future holds. Click on the link below or google "HMRC Childcare Choices" to check if you're eligible:

[Homepage](#) | [HMRC Childcare Choices](#)

Sun Safety: We can hope summer is just round the corner!

Protecting your child from the sun is essential to prevent sunburn and reduce the risk of skin damage. Here are some practical tips:

- Use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 that protects against UVA and UVB rays.
- Apply and reapply sunscreen often.
- Stay inside or in the shade during peak hours. Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm from March to October.
- Wear sun protective clothing, such as lightweight cotton pants, long-sleeved shirts, and hats.
- Consider kid-sized sunglasses.
- Keep babies younger than 6 months out of direct sunlight.
- Seek shade under a tree, an umbrella, or the stroller canopy.

- Cover up at the pool and if in and out of the water, re-apply sunscreen.
- Stay hydrated, encourage children to drink plenty of water while outdoors to prevent dehydration.

Remember that sunburn increases the risk of skin cancer, so taking preventive measures is crucial. If sunburn occurs, follow these steps:

- Cool the skin with a cool shower or damp towel.
- Apply after sun cream or spray.
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.
- Avoid tight-fitting clothes over sunburnt skin.
- Do not pop blisters or scratch peeling skin.
- Seek medical help if the sunburn is severe or if symptoms like fever, dehydration, or blistering occur.

Please remember to dress your children in appropriate clothing when coming to nursery in hot weather and provide a named sunhat that shades their face.

Improvements

As previously mentioned, we have seen a number of improvements across our nurseries and preschools. These include:

- **Freemantle**- Walls painted indoors, garden update with new furniture and areas for children.
- **Sholing**- Walls painted, drainage issues addressed, garden grass re-laid and new furniture.
- **Swaythling**- Walls painted and indoor areas redecorated, Chimneys removed and roof repaired, buggy store repaired.
- **Shirley**- Outside decking replaced, carpeting and flooring replaced. New garden play equipment coming soon!
- **West End**- Inside redecorated, smaller garden renovated and new garden furniture.
- **Portswood**- Inside redecorated, all windows replaced upstairs and training room updated.
- **Boldre**- New canvas cover on yurt, old cover cleaned.
- **Bitterne**- New Preschool, redecorated, new resources and technology items bought.
- **Barton Stacey**- Redecorated, new entrance currently being developed.

- **All settings**- a new intranet system which will make keeping documents secure and readily available much easier.
- A new payroll system to make aspects of HR and staff management more user friendly.
- Investigating the use of an exciting new nursery management system with details released in the months to come.



Dates For Your Diary

- **Monday 01st July 2024** – All Paint Pots Nurseries and Preschools are closed for a group training day.
- Last Day of Term for term time children only – **23rd July 2024**
- **Speak to your manager for individual dates for school leavers ceremonies.**
- **15th June 2024** – The King's Birthday.
- **16th June 2024** – Father's Day.