Welcome to Pre-School!

We would like to warmly welcome all our new parents and children who have recently joined us, we sincerely hope you enjoy your time at the Centre and would request that if you have any questions, queries, suggestions or concerns you let us know.

Could we also take this opportunity wish you all a Happy New Year and to say thank you for all the many Christmas gifts and cards received throughout the Centre.

Christmas Play success

Once again the children from the Nursery and Pre-School rooms did not disappoint and performed 2 outstanding shows of Mary’s knitting for their families and friends.

The singing on both days was superb!

Staff and children put a huge effort into making the performances a success and to hear the comments from families as they were leaving it was clear that they had succeeded.

Thanks to all the staff who participated, I hope you’ll agree it was all worth it!

Also thanks to the staff at LICA and Catering for making it happen!
Christmas at Pre-School

Christmas is an exciting time at Pre-School and we started our celebrations by turning the Foyer into scenes from the Snowman, staff stayed after work on the 28th November to create some magic and it was definitely worth it to hear the comments from the children as they arrived on 1st December.

Wednesday 3rd December was cinema day for the Nursery and Pre-School children who visited the Campus Cinema to watch The Snowman on the big screen.

On Friday 5th December we had a visit from two special reindeers, the weather wasn’t great but the reindeers didn’t appear to mind!

Christmas parties were enjoyed by all, with the Crèche and Baby room teams organising singing, dancing and party games with their children whilst Harvey entertained the Nursery and Pre-School children. Each child then visited our Christmas grotto meeting and receiving a gift from Father Christmas.

To end the celebrations all staff and children wore their Christmas Jumpers on 18th December and after enjoying Christmas Dinner the children had a visit from Bonington Bear looking very festive wearing his Christmas waistcoat!!

A very busy but thoroughly enjoyable month we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did.

Snow Fun!

The children were very excited to see the recent snow and hail.

Nursery 2 children wanted to make a snowman but decided there wasn’t enough snow 😏

They brought the snow and hail indoors instead to explore what happens to it.

The children watched and learnt about how the snow and hail melted and changed, and also how cold it was. They also had lots of fun filling and emptying buckets with spades and cups.

Pre-School 2 children also brought the snow indoors, making small snowballs and snowmen and watching the snow melting into puddles of water. Some of the children preferred to hold the snow in their hands and watch it melt that way instead.

The children continued to be excited and enjoyed watching the snow through the window until the sun came out and it all melted!!
Pre-School 1 News

We did lots of preparation for the Christmas production of ‘Mary’s Knitting’ which kept us extremely busy and some of us even learnt to knit with Shelley!!

We really enjoyed going to see the Snowman at the Cinema and made our very own snowman for the foyer.

This term we are looking at size differences and sequencing – making pictures of snowmen (we even made the real thing when it snowed!!).

We have been learning about ‘Under the Sea’ and had lots of fun turning the snowman into a diver (although Liz and Shelley got a bit hot and bothered as it was hard work).

We had fun trying on a wet suit, flippers, goggles and a mask, pretending to dive to the bottom of Pre-School Sea where we found lots of shells and fish.

Look out for the finished divers in the foyer!!

Let’s get Messy, Explore and Learn

We have a mud kitchen in Nursery 1!

The kitchen has given the children the opportunity to experience and explore soil, water and other natural resources.

They have enjoyed getting muddy, experiencing textures, mixing liquids and transferring from one container to another.

The mud kitchen has encouraged the children to be creative and use their imagination. They have shown that mud can be anything they want it to be, making mud pies, cakes, picnics etc.

We might be getting messy in our Mud Kitchen but we’re learning lots.

Baby room Sensory Area

Kathy recently attended a training course which focused on how babies learn through their senses of sight, sound, smell and touch.

Throughout the course it was emphasised how sensory exploration and the use of natural materials is one of the best way for babies to learn.

Kathy came back full of inspiration and enthusiasm and it was full steam ahead to initiate the ideas into the Babyroom.

Since the course Kathy and the baby room team have been changing and developing the room. Mobiles have been renewed and more sensory equipment has been added.

Extending the sensory area has given the area a bigger focus in the room and the babies have enjoyed exploring some of the new textures and resources.
Elf Friend

Much festive fun was had over the Christmas period in Pre-School 3.

It started with an advent visitor in the form of ‘Buddy the Elf’.

Buddy surprised staff and children every morning, turning up in different places!

The children’s favourite was when we found him in the Nature Nest after following his tiny snowy footprints!!

We did lots of Christmas craft activities and enjoyed going to the cinema to watch ‘The Snowman’ and meeting the reindeers when they came to visit.

The Nativity was a great success and we would like to say a big ‘well done’ to all the children who were fantastic!

We are very proud of you all and we would like to wish you all a very happy new year.

Crèche makeover

Crèche 2 and Crèche 1 have recently taken delivery of some lovely wooden, low level furniture.

The furniture has helped the teams create specific areas of learning in the rooms whilst providing the children with opportunities to access resources independently.

In addition the furniture is at a height which helps aid the children’s physical development by encouraging them to pull themselves into a standing position.

Since the new room layouts we have observed how the children have made use of the whole of the room and utilised the areas/resources within it.

The furniture appears to have successfully enhanced the physical environment and the overall development of the children.
Hidden Treasures

On a training course attended by Kathy and Sam the Man the benefits of encouraging children to experiment by providing them with a wide range of both natural and recycled materials was explored.

A visit to Sam’s Scrap Store in Blackburn was suggested.

Sam’s is a warehouse which takes a variety of corporate waste donated by local businesses.

The waste is as diverse as cardboard tubes, sheets of die cut plastic, containers small and large, offcuts of paper, card and textiles, paint, canvas, posters, wallpaper, paper cups, foam, fabric, string, cord, ribbon and string!

Their philosophy along with that of many other professionals is the belief that children allowed unstructured play opportunities will be helped to improve their: Communication skills, Creativity and problem solving, Team working and Collaboration, Ability to explore textures and colours and their willingness to experiment by being offered these opportunities.

A visit was arranged!

The scrap store was an Aladdin’s Cave of goodies!!
There were lots of resources to choose from
Joanne, Sam and Kathy filled two trollies with various items for the children to explore and play with.

We cannot wait to see how the staff and children use the open-ended materials to extend their learning through play.

A second visit is definitely on the cards!

World Book Day

Join us on 5th March 2015 to celebrate World Book Day. Staff and children are invited to dress up as their favourite storybook character to celebrate the wonder of books.

Usborne books will also be in the foyer area with books available to purchase.

Newsletter January February 2015
Children’s Survey

In order to gain the children’s views, thoughts and feelings about the Pre-School Centre you will be receiving through the post over the next few days a child survey.

Key people have spoken to a number of the children about the survey with some of them, addressing, stamping and posting the surveys to their home address.

We would really appreciate if you could help your child to complete and return the survey to the Centre.

Parent surveys will be emailed to all parents over the next few weeks. Please do take a few minutes to complete, your feedback, ideas and initiatives are important to us.

New baby

Congratulations to both Vicki and Adam on the birth of their daughter

Milena Victoria

Born 19th January 2015

New baby

Congratulations to both Claire and Tony on the birth of their daughter

Sienna Mary

Born 24th January 2015

Pre-School staff
Reception class visits

This term the staff in the Pre-School rooms are visiting a number of local Primary schools.

We hope these visits will help us gain valuable information in how to further prepare the children for the transition to reception in September. By working together we aim to ensure that the children have the most positive experience possible. They have already made a terrific start by using the self-service lunch trolleys.

Visit by the Vet nurse

This term the vet nurse will be coming along to Pre-School 3 to talk to the children about the importance of taking good care of pets.

This is part of the room initiative which is aiming to develop the children’s understanding about the care and wellbeing of others.

Newsletter January February 2015
Australia Day

Saffron’s daddy came to visit Pre-School 1 on 26\textsuperscript{th} January to tell us about Australia as part of our Australia Day celebrations.

He showed us a map of Australia and where he lived in Melbourne. We talked about it being a long way from England and that you could only get there in an aeroplane or boat.

We saw a picture of the Australian Flag and all learnt to say G’Day Mate!

We also looked at some Australian animals and tried to copy how they moved: jumping like a kangaroo was the favourite.

Saffron’s daddy read us a story called ‘Possum magic’; we learnt about different places in Australia and the types of food which are special to Australia like Vegemite and Lamingtons.

We really enjoyed learning about Australia and would like to say a big THANK YOU to Saffron’s daddy.

If any other parents would be interested in visiting Pre-School to talk to the children about their home country and traditions we would be very very grateful.
**Eco-Hub**

This term we have an exciting new project. Each Wednesday groups of children from the Pre-School rooms will be going to the Eco-hub.

Run by Green Lancaster the hub has an allotment, chickens and a lovely picnic area with a wood fired pizza oven.

We will be planting seeds and growing our own vegetables. We have also decided to have our own allotment at Pre-School too, so everyone gets the chance to be green fingered!

Our first visit on 21st January was successful despite the weather!

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**Parent Information/Reminders**

Please submit the dates for your 2 consecutive weeks summer term holidays, to be taken between 29th June until 28th August 2015 by **Friday 24th April 2015**

**Dates for your diary**

**Term Dates:**
- 5th January until 1st April 2015
- 13th April until 28th August 2015

**Undergraduate Terms:**
- 12th January until 20th March 2015
- 20th April until 26th June 2015

**Invoice dates**
- 5th January until 30th January 2015
- 2nd February until 27th February 2015
- 2nd March until 1st April 2015

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