



Smiz Kid New

Smiz Kids 511 Newsletter

Summer 2008

An Inspector Calls!

On Tuesday 26th February 2008, a day after a 2 day inspection of the Nursery, we had our Inspection of Smizkids!

Lasting 5 hours the inspection was a thorough look at everything we do in the club and we are delighted to report that the inspector gave us an "Outstanding" in EVERY area of the Inspection.

We are so proud that the work put into the club by all the staff that work there is recognised as being at the highest level.

We have long maintained that the club is like it is because we believe in the individuality of the children and this club belongs to them to do the things they wish to do.

Some of the comments raised in the report were:

- A substantial range of equipment and play resources are readily accessible to children
- Innovative planning provides them with exciting opportunities to make active choices about their play and promote their natural curiosity. Free-flow play, where children decide to play indoors or outdoors further promotes their opportunity to direct

their own play

- Children are highly motivated and make use of the appealing activities to learn and extend their knowledge but also to have fun in the relaxed yet productive environment
- A clear and concise written policy works effectively in practice to promote equal opportunities for all children. They are clearly valued for their individual contribution as they develop excellent relationships with peers and staff
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. A strong emphasis is placed on promoting positive behaviour and successful methods are adapted effectively to meet the ages and developmental stages of all children
- Children listen intently to staff and respond positively to a consistent use of praise and encouragement
- Children receive warm cuddles and affection and build trusting relationships which contributes to their sense of belonging



Children make active decisions about their play, making choices as they develop their confidence and self-esteem. They develop an acute awareness of the needs of others as they help each other and learn to share and take turns

- The setting is held in high esteem by parents who express their total satisfaction in the care their children receive

To view the full report either go to our website and follow the link to the feedback pages, or visit the main Ofsted website at www.ofsted.gov.uk and search for Smisby in the reports section. Finally, if you do not have access to the internet please feel free to ask us for a copy of the report.

Far too often we see Holiday Clubs and After School clubs being "holding pens" that keep the children safe but fail to stimulate the children in constructive ways.

We think we have struck the right balance in what we do but are always looking at ways to improve the club. If you know of something we can do to improve the club please feel free to come and speak to us.

Wiiiiii.....

After spending some time getting the clubhouse refurbished at the start of 2007 we set about updating some of the equipment in the club. Whilst 2006 was all about sports and loads of new sports equipment, this last year was a "techno" year.

We now have 4 computers for the kids to play with, not only loaded up with all those addictive arcade games, but with many educational programmes and office software in case people choose to do their homework. (Has anyone seen them doing anything OTHER than playing games? - no? - thought not!)



Finally for Xmas the PS2 had a bedfellow in the cabinet, a brand new Nintendo Wiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii.

With 4 controllers and 4 nunchucks, Wii Sports, Wii Play and Mario and Sonic at the Olympics we are already seeing great things from the children by way of co-operation, team playing and sharing.





Easter Holiday Club

We had a very busy Easter club again this year and once again the kids got involved in all of the activities.

In the first week we made some pom-pom animals. The children

really enjoyed doing this as some of them had not made pom-poms before. Chocolate nests, which they all enjoyed doing and eating, no surprises there then. We also made Easter magnets, tissue paper flowers, pebble animals which the children enjoyed as they generally get into a bit of a mess.

We did some "eggciting" sports with different



activities such as the egg and spoon race and an assault course that they had to try and get around without dropping their eggs.

The children planted some sweet peas which they took home to look after and care for and hopefully when they start growing some of the children will let us know.

In the second week we made some fabulous spring animals. We enjoyed making Easter Bonnet cakes which the children enjoyed eating - again!

It was amazing how quickly the



cross heads the children made grew! Some were left overnight and had sprouted roots by the morning.

Our afternoon visit to Rosliston Forestry Centre was on a fine day so we had a leisurely nature walk around the site. We looked at the willow house that was just starting to grow and the sculptures from wood and the mining sculpture. We finished the visit on the adventure playground and the children enjoyed climbing on the giant wooden owl!



Slip, Slop, Slap!

It's coming up to that time of year when we will be utilising the garden even more, especially now that we have the new play equipment.

Last year was a real let down but we have higher hopes for this year.

We are hopefully going to be having longer sessions outside and will be moving some of our planned activities and tea times to the outside play areas.

What do we do?

We will provide shade for outside activities in the form of the large gazebo and drinks are always accessible to the children. We will help the children to apply sunscreen and ensure they are dressed appropriately.

What can you do?

Provide your child with adequate and appropriate clothing for the weather conditions. Hat's must be provided in the summer months and a suitable factor sun screen provided with your child's name on.



- Slip! Slip on a shirt
- Slop! Slop on some sunscreen
- Slap! Slap on a hat



A little bit about Kelly

I first became interested in working with children whilst volunteering at the YWC play group in Loughborough about 12 years ago.

After studying at college for two years I gained my level 3 qualification as a Nursery Nurse and found a part time position as a nanny to two young boys who were an absolute pleasure to look after.

Eventually I was employed as a Nursery Nurse by The Whitehouse Day Nursery in Shephed where I spent 7 1/2 happy

years in the pre-school room. It was here that I gained experience in a senior role, becoming one of five deputies before deciding that I needed a slight change. This led to the decision to study further with the Open University to gain my Foundation Degree in early Years.

I have almost finished the first part of this course and intend to start the second this coming October, with a few more years study ahead still to come.

Since joining the After

School/Holiday Club of Smisby Day Nursery in December of last year, I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the school children, joining in their games and becoming their friend, but have also had the pleasure of spending brief times in the other rooms.

After spending ten years working mainly with pre-school aged children, I am very much looking forward to joining the Toddler room in July, which will bring a welcome change and the opportunity to get to know this age group better.



It's been a while!

Those of you who have been using the club for a few years will suddenly realise that this is the first newsletter you have seen in some time. (Early 2006 was the last one!)

This is all down to me I am afraid! Since taking over the nursery I have taken on so many additional roles and work that it was one of those jobs that I just could not seem to make time for.

The first big change that had a major impact was the Childcare Vouchers. Whilst I have always

encouraged every parent to start using them, if their employer runs a scheme, they are a complete headache to administer.

We currently accept about 8 different voucher schemes and many of them have 2 or 3 different ways of paying, such as electronic, paper, or phone.

In the end the work was just too much for me to give it the proper mind share that we brought in a new member of Staff, Tracey Goatley, to take over the running of all the parents accounts and all the associated schemes

such as Childcare Grant, Welfare Milk, Census taking and Occupancy. It has made a huge difference.

Secondly we seem to have spent the whole of the last year working on decorating the Nursery! (more on that in the Nursery Newsletter.)

Finally Sheila has taken over the editorship of the newsletter from me and from now on they will roll out on a regular basis as Sheila is so well organised and makes sure that things get done on time.

Ian

Choo Choo!

You may have already heard about our walking ropes. These are basically foam rings joined by canvas straps which enable us to safely walk the children back to the buses after School.



We originally saw the idea in a catalogue and decided we could make some better ones so Ian got the sewing machine out and hey presto - walking ropes!

The large one allows us to guide 16 children safely back to the vehicles, and this one is used at Burton Road School and by Pre School to go over to the hall or up to the playing fields.



The second one has space for 12 children and is used at either Willesley school or Burton road on the days when there are so many children we need to have 3 staff collecting the children!



Easter Egg competition

During the Easter club we ran a colouring

competition which the children really enjoyed.



We had lots of entries and our independent judge Janet Glover picked the following winners.

Well done Riley and Eleanor.

Janet, who is an accomplished water colour artist herself, said well done to everyone who entered. "They were all very good



and it was difficult to choose the winners."



New Staff

Claire Janes is joining us in the after school and holiday club after the May half term. She comes to us with a background in youth work and community working, especially with younger children. Claire, a scout leader and youth work volunteer, has been looking to get into working with children of this age group for some time. Claire has said she

wants to do a qualification to bring together all her existing skills. Claire also has a lot of skills relating to her community work. She is quite happy wielding a chainsaw, hedge laying or even dry stone walling!

Kelly Shaw joined us in December in a part time role. However, because we have three staff in the Nursery going on maternity leave within the next few

months, the plan is to move Kelly into the nursery in Toddler room full time in July to cover maternity leave for the next nine months.

Sometime in the spring next year we may well be having another shuffle around of staff as staff return from maternity leave and Kelly may well be returning to the After School Club.



A busy time for the Club

This year has been the busiest so far for the Out of School Club. Some of this has to do with the fact that 26 children left the Nursery this summer to go to school and many of them enrolled into the After School Club.

Some days we now collect 20 children from Burton Road School alone.

After a break of a couple of years we now have some children from Blackfordby School again.

Earlier in the year we were approached by several schools in Ashby to see if we wanted to run an After School Club within the School. We decided that the compromise for the children went against our

core values and was not a comfortable one for us. We therefore decided not to tender for the chance to provide a service.

All too often we have seen "In School" clubs become holding services for the children until they are collected.

Finally two schools opted to "signpost" Smizkids511 to their parents. Schools that do not have the ability to run their own out of School scheme must tell parents of a preferred scheme that they can recommend based on the quality of service. Both schools opted to recommend Smizkids511 based on the fact that we have the best reputation in the area - probably! ☺



All this has meant we have bought a new Smizbus. This one is a 9 seater Peugeot Expert Teepee and so far it has proved to be a big hit - so much so that it looks like we will be getting another one towards the end of the year to give us a maximum collection facility for 32 children.

On a trip to school the other morning one of the children said that people stared at the bus. I asked if that bothered them and they proudly informed me - "No, they stare because they think it's cool." I asked the children what they thought and I got a resounding "we think it's cool too!" Another satisfied little customer.



Odds & ends!

Holiday club Dates

Half Term 27/5 – 30/5
Summer Club 16/7 - 29/8
Half Term 22/10 - 26/10

School Starters

If your child starts school in September and requires after school care then please get in touch with Liz as soon as possible as there are now limited spaces available. Also if you want to be put on the mailing list for the holiday club booklets and reservation forms then again please contact Liz as these spaces are on a first come first serve basis for each club and fill up quickly.

Placement details

Please return the new annual update of placement detail forms as soon as possible. We often need to call parents for varying reasons but mainly if your child is unwell and sometimes find that telephone details have changed. If your contact details change please let us know immediately.

Sickness/absence

Please inform us as soon as possible if your child is off of school and does not require collection. If your child is not there we will not leave the playground until we know where your child is and will have to ring you. ~This means the other children are having to wait around.

Allergy Aware

Please be aware that there are children in the club with allergies. This is why we ask children not to bring foodstuffs into the club, especially nuts. Please ring us beforehand if you need to send your child in with foodstuffs.



Race for Life

Unfortunately in the last 8 months both Ian and I have each had a sister who has been diagnosed with breast cancer.

After surgery and treatment both are on the road to recovery. As a result I, along with Ian's sister Teresa, and our daughters, Laura and Heather, are doing the Race for Life in Cambridge on Sunday 6th July 2008.



Lot's of the girls from the nursery are all taking part in races over the county too and therefore in the run up to this event there will be a collection box outside pre-school and a sponsor form for anyone wishing to donate to this charity.

Your support would

be very much appreciated. I'll keep you posted as to how the events go and even publish some photo's in the next newsletter.

