



[Best Friends Childcare Centre Limited](#)  
[Newsletter - April 2007](#)

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## 1. Welcome - to all our parents and children!

This Newsletter will be the main form of communication for us all so please takes *the time* to read and feedback to us when required as we do work in partnership with parents.

We would like to welcome all the new children and parents to the nursery that have joined us since our last edition.

## 2. Introducing your team -

Gemma Jones - Director of Childcare and Operational

Helen Hudson - Director of Administration, Finance and Design

Hilda McGrath - Deputy Nursery Manager

Gemma Brown - Nursery Practitioner - Head of Room

Lorraine Dockree - Assistant Nursery Practitioner - Under 2's

Kerry Hickson - Assistant Nursery Practitioner - Over 2's

Kayley Harmsworth - Nursery Practitioner - Over 2's area

Gemma Brooks - Nursery Practitioner - Under 2's

Tracy Harmsworth - Assistant nursery practitioner - both areas

Caron Hooper - Nursery practitioner (maternity cover)

We also have Student & Work Experience placements working with us throughout the weeks until July. You will be introduced to these temporary staff when you come with your children.

We have a new Student starting with us after the Easter Holidays, her name is Michelle Dockree. Michelle will be with us on Monday and Wednesdays. As you may have guessed yes it is Lorraine's sister!

## 3. Information for Parents -

This section will deal with the day-to-day issues of the nursery and the procedures that have to be followed in order to satisfy not only Ofsted, but to ensure the safety and comfort of your child/children at all times.

### Reception Area Bags

**Please could we take all bags home at the end of your Child's weekly session to make sure everything is in there for the following week?**

We would be grateful if you could please have at minimum of 2 changes of clothes in your child's bags. This is in case they have an accident and get messy with the daily activities which we do!! If you do not have a Best Friends Childcare Centre bag, Could you please inform Gemma Jones, Hilda or Gemma Brown and we will make sure you will be given one.

Could you also please check your child's baskets for letters and information updates? There have been a few occasions where the baskets have not been checked and no nappies or wipes have been supplied. Please can you look in the baskets daily?

Slippers - Can you please supply your child/children with slippers? On a few occasions when we have had a fire drill children within the nursery have not had anything on their feet, as you may gather the children have become very upset and distressed. We would very much appreciate it if you can therefore provide these for your child.

#### 4. Operational Issues –

##### Price increase

As you may already be aware we have increased our childcare session prices and the new tariff will take effect as of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007. Please check your child's basket if you have not already received your letter.

Whilst we have to raise our prices to cover additional increases we believe that this increase is in line with the service we offer and have been able to push back the increase from April to May this year. We are now sourcing much more local produce instead of using a supermarkets as well as offering extra activities within the price. We are constantly updating and adding to our equipment to ensure that we follow the latest guidelines in providing correct stimulation and education you're your children. As is already the case this increase does not include Playmakers or Tiny Mites. If your child is in on a Wednesday or a Thursday you will need to add an additional £5.00 per class per month per child. If your child is in on both days, you will need to add an additional £10.00 a month to your standing order. If you have any queries over this please do not hesitate to contact Gemma Jones or Helen Hudson. We have enclosed a copy of the new prices with this newsletter in case you require any extra days or sessions in the future.

##### Sun hats and sun cream

We take the health and safety of our children very seriously...therefore please can we ask that you provide each of your children with a suitable sun hat and sun protection cream/spray/lotion (at least factor 20+ is recommended even in this British climate). You must provide these items as we are unable to apply any lotions/sprays etc in case of allergic reaction or skin conditions. Can the sun cream be either new or within date (not more than 1 year old) - as the effectiveness of sun protection cream etc reduces to an unsafe level after 1 year. These items may be kept in the children's baskets during the warm/hot weather.

##### 2<sup>nd</sup> year Birthday party

We would like to thank all the parents and children who came to our second year f opening birthday party. I hope you all will agree that it was a fantastic event for us all to get to know one another a little more. As well as you getting to know other parents within the nursery. We look forward to seeing you all again at the next event.

##### Illnesses

We would like to request that when your child is absent from nursery could you please contact us and let us know that your child/children will not be attending before 9.30am wherever possible and at least by 11am. This will help us forward plan for meal times and activities!! On a few occasions children have been brought in to the nursery when they are not well. If your child is not well he/she should be kept away from the nursery for the correct incubation

period. If you are unsure please do not hesitate in calling to speak to a member of staff. If we need to contact you because your child becomes unwell whilst at nursery, we will advise on collection the amount of exclusion period required.

### Notice board

We are not sure if you are aware of the parent's notice boards in both areas. These have all information on them regarding your child's planning, curriculum and how they have been throughout the day. In the baby room this information is transferred onto a daily report which is handed over to you at the end of your child's session. This contains detailed information - what your child has done throughout the day, bottles, food intake, nappies and sleep times. A member of staff will discuss the information with you in more detail so you become aware of how much they have eaten and what they enjoyed playing with at nursery on that particular day etc.

In the older bay just inside the front door is the over 2's information. On this board will be the curriculum planning, daily food intake and a list of activities which your child has been involved in throughout the day. Please feel free to have a look in more detail about the activities. This information will be passed on to you at the end of the day - again listing details of how much your child has eaten, slept and what activities they have done throughout the day. If you would like to know any further information about the activities and how we have carried them out please do not hesitate in asking a member of staff.

### Planning and curriculum

We follow "Birth to three" in the under two's and for the over two's we follow the "foundation stage". If your child will be moving rooms because they will be turning two and you would like a copy of the new room's planning please ask a member of staff for a copy.

Who would like to be involved? If you would like to join in any of the events by allowing your child to bring something into the nursery representing the colour, shape or number of the month this would be fantastic. We find it helps your child develop both at nursery and at home by connecting the 2 areas with a toy, or item of clothing. Anything lent to us will be returned at the end of that month when the topic is completed.

### Questionnaires

We would like to thank you for returning the questionnaires to us. We are grateful for you taking the time to complete them your quick response. Could you please return the contact details so we can update your child's file in case of an emergency? On a couple of occasions contact details are no longer in use or parents have changed jobs. Please could you let us know any changes as it is important to keep all details up to date?

### Garden

We are sure you are aware and have noticed the wonderful garden. The team have worked really hard painting the fences and making use of the fence and the veranda to create a variety of additional activities. The team have made it look fantastic. The children love all of their new toys and activities.

### Recycling

You may notice some bins underneath the office which have been painted!!! The staff will be creating a recycling centre with the children; they will be recycling cardboard/paper, Plastic, Tins and food for the rabbits!! No the nursery does not have a rabbit, but we do know someone whom has many!!

In creating the recycling centre we hope to encourage the children to develop more knowledge and understanding of the environment and allows Best Friends to become more environmentally aware and to actively make a difference. We are highlighting in particular the waste of food. We aim that the children will become more aware of this and that some unwanted food and materials can be used again. (We hope that we do **NOT** find the children putting all their food in there just for the rabbits to eat!!!!!!)

### Moving rooms

When your child reaches their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday they move up to the over 2's area. We start encouraging the children to move into the area as a slow process by doing settling-in sessions throughout the weeks prior to them turning 2. Once we feel the children are comfortable we start increasing this to whole mornings and then afternoons. We find this helps the children and gets them ready for the bigger room!!

### Staff changes

We would like to take this opportunity to let you know that it was Kerry's last day with us on Friday when she left on Maternity leave. We would like to take this opportunity to wish Kerry and David very best wishes in the coming weeks and months. We hope you will wish her well too and that everything goes as smoothly as possible! Kerry passes on her thanks for all the gifts and kind words that she received during her last week.

We also would like to take this opportunity to introduce our new member of staff who will be covering Kerry's Maternity leave. Tracy will be covering Kerry on Mondays and Tuesdays and Caron will be covering on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

There will be a few staff changes in the nursery whilst Kerry is away. Lorraine will be moving areas and will be joining Hilda and Kayley in the over two's area. Whilst Tracy and Caron will be joining Gemma Brown and Gemma Brooks in the Baby room. I hope you all will join us in welcoming Caron to Best Friends and supporting the staff in their new areas.

### Nursery grants and tax schemes

The funding scheme has now just changed, if your child is 2yrs old and their birthday falls between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2005 you may be entitled to funding. If you claim any of the following: Income based Jobseekers Allowance, Income support, Housing benefit, Council tax benefit, Child tax credit or working tax credit we may be able to claim for a maximum of 3 sessions. If you are on any of these benefits please could you let me know so we can claim the funding for you?

When your child/children reach the term of their 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday we can start claiming funding for them. The reason for this is that they attend a private day nursery and do not attend a state school for the 2.5hrs funded education. We can therefore claim this directly from the government. We apply automatically on your behalf and pass the funding received directly back to you in the form of reduced fees. We will inform you as and when this situation becomes applicable to your child/children.

There is also another benefit available to you providing your particular employer is part of the scheme. It is commonly referred to as the "voucher" scheme. As a working parent you are entitled to apply for £243.00 a month to be deducted from your wages and these are paid directly to us from your employer. The result of this is that you do not pay Income Tax or National Insurance on that sum of money each month. This therefore allows you to be slightly better off. You then only pay the balance outstanding of fees due. This scheme is well worth joining and you should contact your employer to ask if they take part in the scheme.

If you would like any of the above information in more details then please do not hesitate in contacting Hilda or Gemma.

### **Birthdays**

We do celebrate every child's Birthday even if they are not present on their actual special day. We can make Birthday cakes if required (please give us suitable notice!) and we will focus on a healthy option wherever possible. We have candles in the nursery for these occasions and will make your child feel very special on their day. We are sorry to have to ask **that no shop-bought cakes may be brought in for these occasions** as they may contain **ingredients that cause allergic reactions.**

Children who will be celebrating their Birthdays since the last issue:

Tahlia	4 <sup>th</sup> April	2 <sup>nd</sup> Birthday
Benjamin	21 <sup>st</sup> May	2 <sup>nd</sup> Birthday
Lillie	25 <sup>th</sup> May	2 <sup>nd</sup> Birthday
Ciara	5 <sup>th</sup> June	3 <sup>rd</sup> Birthday
Keira seaman	12 <sup>th</sup> June	3 <sup>rd</sup> Birthday
Kene	23 <sup>rd</sup> June	3 <sup>rd</sup> Birthday

Staff - yes, we even celebrate the staff's Birthdays too!

Hilda 28<sup>th</sup> May      *21<sup>st</sup> Plus again!!*

Tracy 11<sup>th</sup> June      *21<sup>st</sup> plus again!!*

### **5. Training & Qualifications -**

We see this area as vitally important for our staff and will have much benefit for you and your children.

All the staffs have been on a variety of courses since our last issue:

Gemma Jones - British Sign Language (CDPDA) - Continued

Lorraine - Pre School Alliance level 3 - Continued

Tracy - Basic food Hygiene - April 24<sup>th</sup>

Gemma Brown - Basic food Hygiene - April 24<sup>th</sup>

Gemma Brooks - Basic food hygiene - April 24<sup>th</sup>

Gemma Brooks - Paediatric first aid - May 2007

Hilda - Diversity - 30<sup>th</sup> April

Kayley - Diversity - 30<sup>th</sup> April

I would like to take this opportunity in thanking all the staff for the outstanding hard work and achievements in gaining more knowledge by attending these courses out of hours, which develops our children further during the day.

6. *Dates for your diary -*