
The Ellingham

"The finest care, the greatest fun,
the most encouragement".

Entertainer

Ellingham House

Day Nursery
(since 1995)

www.ellinghamhouse.co.uk

Newsletter No. 52

Autumn 2018

Welcome to our newsletter.

What ho!

It was a most wonderful summer. Ellingham enjoyed an ‘alfresco’ couple of months or so, making the most of one of the best of our summers. Children enjoying all that the grounds can offer, babies enjoying their morning sleep under the shade of the copper beech tree, toddlers and pre-schoolers playing in their groups in the woods, on the lawns, up in the sand-pit, by the paddock, under the gazebos dotted around the garden. Wonderful waterplay squeals of fun and excitement with hose pipes and lawn sprinklers, laughter and outdoor joy – all what happy childhood memories are made of. Happy days!

And for some, Ellingham last days.....with the usual bitter sweet mix of pride in the childrens readiness to move on to ‘big’ school tempered by the need to say a fond and final cheerio to those that we have cared for and watch grow into who they are today. The journey from Baby-Unit to the Infant School main door is one that we have across the nursery shared, nurtured and been a part of and we wish the Class of 2018 all the very best for the future.

At our ‘Leavers Party’ tears were shared and farewells imparted and the most marvellous gifts given. Thank you to Katie Dalton who made a delightful speech on behalf of the leaving parents and a huge and most grateful thank you to all the many leaving parents who contributed to the 5 meter Bell Tent (Yhurt) which will be a wonderful addition to the facility of the grounds for all the children to use and enjoy. We will store it until the Spring of next year and look forward to enjoying ‘group-time under canvas’ throughout next summer.

We have also been given a tree swing seat to be hung from the Copper Beech (thank you Elora & Eli) and from Melissa a new Cuckoo clock for the main hallway, as well as, a wooden playhouse for the grounds for all the children to play in.

Thank you so very, very much to all our leaving children and parentsand a video may go viral next year of me trying to put the Yhurt up!!!!

Forty-two children left our Pre-School group this autumn, feeding 18 local infant schools. Of these children, 86% have entered the State system and the balancing 14% have joined local independent schools.

Good luck to all and I look forward to hearing of your future successes.

As we enter the season of ‘mists and mellow fruitfulness’ and looking ahead towards Christmas and the New Year the nursery is very busy and the Baby-Unit positively thriving! In fact, if any parents are requiring Baby-Unit places in 2019/20, please advise us as soon as you are able to as the register is looking very full and healthy!



A Recipe for Success!

Now, this is a new addition to the newsletter – from now on, in each edition of the E.E. we will include one of Reg’s most popular children’s lunch-time recipes. This is hallowed information and not to be spread abroad! Please read the recipe, subject it to memory.....
.....and then eat this section of the newsletter!

To add additional interest, we will also have a staff member contributing one of their favourite recipes.....

Reg’s Top Secret Chicken Curry Recipe:

| | |
|---|--|
| 500 gr Diced chicken | Melt fat in pot, fry onion & carrot lightly. |
| 50 gr Diced Onion | Add chicken and seal on all sides. |
| 50 gr Diced Carrot | Add curry powder and cook for 4-5 minutes |
| 1 x Desert spoon Mild Madras Curry Powder | Add tomato paste then flour, stir in to make a roux – cook for a few minutes. |
| 1 x Desert spoon Tomato paste | Slowly add stock and cook on a gentle heat |
| 35 gr Butter or Marge | until chicken is cooked and tender – approx 25 – 35 mins |
| 35 gr Plain Flour | |
| 250 mls Chicken Stock approx | Amount of stock is approximate, add slowly and cook gently until desired consistency of sauce is reached – add more if required. |

And enjoy!

Staff Guest Recipe:

Hugh’s Bajan Rum Punch! (over eighteens only!)

4 parts splintered/crushed ice
3 parts Mountgay Rum
2 parts Sugar Syrup
1 part freshly squeezed lime juice (key ingredient)
A splash of angostura bitters and a sprinkling of grated nutmeg
Absolutely sublime!!!!!!
Happy days!

Ellingham Is A 'Nut Free' Environment:

.....(But you gotta be crazy to work here, boom, boom!) – Seriously though, we have to be very, very careful with all and any foodstuffs within the nursery.

Please do not bring any foodstuffs into the nursery without first enquiring of room staff regarding suitability and the possible allergy issues of our children.

Sickness Absence: In recent times we have tried to help parents who are forced to take time off work when caring for poorly children by allowing swop sessions (when availability allows) within a week or so of illness at no extra charge.

We have not changed our terms and conditions, all registered attendance remains chargeable regardless of actual attendance, but we will try to assist where we can. However, nursery attendance lost due to illness does not automatically accrue future credits.

Vehicular Issues:

Car Park Etiquette: Please keep the flow through the driveway rather than blocking whilst waiting for parents to return to their cars. We appreciate that sometimes the busyness of the nursery frustrates close to house driveway parking, but, like Waitrose, if you keep circulating eventually you get lucky!

Pedestrians Exiting Driveway - wahayyy madam! A parent had an enormous shock recently as she swung her car into the Ellingham entrance driveway to be confronted by an adult and child leaving the nursery on foot via this access. No accident occurred. But, please when exiting the nursery as a pedestrian or driver, please use the driveway exit adjacent to the churchyard wall as premature grey hair or worse could be the result if you don't!

Speeding vehicles, Speeding vehicles, Speeding vehicles, Speeding!

I am regularly lambasted by parents for the speed at which parents travel down our lane and especially on the Somerley gates corner.

Please Go Slowly along the lane, 15 MPH on the corner and really, really slow on entering the driveway. Please kindly concur and drive accordingly – naming and shaming in next edition!

Communication News - Tapestry - is our on-line children's developmental record system.

Parents are able, via secure log-in systems, to view their child's developmental file comprising all our usual staff observations, photographs and pieces of children's work.

The benefit of this approach is that parents themselves are able to download photo's or information onto their child's file, thus building a much more rounded and fulsome picture of their child's growth and development in a most interactive way.

Parents please be reminded that you must not upload anything from your Tapestry file onto social media and any contravention of this requirement may force the closure of your child's file.

ParentMail: - The recent tree fall across the lane leading to Ellingham House proved the value of our 'mass' texting service alerting parents to urgent information.

All parents should already be on this service, however, one or two of you may have fallen through the admin. net and accordingly if you did not receive a text message to your personal mobile phone please ask your room staff for the ParentMail form.

With winter approaching and the possibility of a snow driven early close – it's is most useful to be connected to this service.

Fallen Tree Clearance: A big thank you to James and Lucy and the Somerley team who came to the rescue when a really rather mature Horse Chestnut tree fell across our lane. We discovered the fall at 7-15 a.m. – completely and comprehensively filling and closing the road. Loose and live electricity cables also complicated the situation. However, the Somerley Estate team swiftly swung into action with chainsaws and JCB and effectively cleared the obstruction. Apologies to any parents who were inconvenienced, but I was delighted to minimise disruption and the nursery was open by 8-45 a.m.

Earlier start to the nursery day - allowing early arrivals from 7-50 a.m.

For those parents who really, really, really need a few extra minutes to get to work we are happy to welcome children into the nursery before the official 8-00 a.m. start time.

So that staffing (ratios/shift lengths) can remain unchallenged, please restrict your use of this 'golden' early start to when necessary.

Session Time Collections Discipline:

Morning session finish – Afternoon session start is 1-30 p.m. – please could collecting parents be prompt to the 1-30 p.m. collection time – thank you.

Carnival 2019:

Well done to all of this year's entries at The Ringwood Carnival – splendid show and so good that Ringwood so healthily punches above its weight in community spirit and events.

We so enjoyed participating last year ('Mary Poppins' float and winning the Jade Clark Memorial Trophy) that plans are well afoot for next year's carnival, the 80th anniversary of the Ringwood carnival – The theme of our float has been decided (Top Secret) and a cast of Pink Ladies are enthusiastically onboard – Great fun to be had!

Staff activities are always an important aspect of Ellingham, and apart from our staff Christmas Party on Friday 7th December – always a most lively evening, the girls certainly know how to party!, We also have organised an autumn clay-pigeon shooting party at Sarah's farm and in the Spring we are off on a works charabanc trip, partaking in a most cultural visit to the Mayflower theatre.....
.....'Rocky Horror' meets the Pink Ladies – What fun!

Down on the farm:

It was a challenging summer in the veg. patch and despite the enthusiastic watering/fun with a hosepipe enjoyed by our Pre-School children, the vegetable crop was not quite as bountiful as previous years. Nonetheless we have harvested French beans, courgette, cabbage, onion, lettuce and beetroot. However, as much as it is "The Good Life" here, self sufficient we are not!

The twin lambs (Pepper & Poppy) born at Easter have filled out and grown rapidly and are most welcome, friendly and vocal members of the paddock. Daisy (dwarf Dexter cow) continues to bellow her daily reminder that it is lunch-time and Monet (miniature Shetland) is still the Prince of the paddock, though now in his mid/late twenties isn't quite as sprightly as he used to be and I can empathise closely with him on that front!!!

Donald our Aylesbury duck happily enjoys the Worlds smallest duck pond and has formed a close friendship with our remaining chicken. Unfortunately, early in the Spring the local fox cubs fed well one night on the other members of our flock – arghhh! We will be restocking the flock with Pre-School incubated eggs and subsequent chicks in the Spring.

Ellingham 'Autumn Animal Watch':

We have set-up a pair of night-time sensor cameras within the grounds at a 'pinchpoint' at the top of the garden where we hope that nocturnal animals will pass. During the next few weeks and months (depending upon success!!!) we and the children will be following the 'afterhours activities' of the fauna that share our Ellingham world. The cameras are able to take video film, as well as, still photographs. We know from their hoof prints that the deer visit us regularly and also would hope to see the foxes that leave us their occasional evening deposits. We look forward to our discoveries!

Lurgies and ailments:

I would like to remind and reassure parents that we do our very best to reasonably limit the cross-contamination of lurgies.

Please kindly play your part by not bringing in children who are presenting symptoms indicative that 'something' is imminently brewing.

If a child has suffered from vomiting or diarrhoea - it should be a full 24 hours since the last episode of illness and also have retained a couple of meals before a parent should consider to bring their child in to rejoin us. Please do not hesitate to speak to us/phone if you are in any doubt as to what to do for the best.

As much as we are able to, and depending upon availability, we will try to organise 'swap' sessions (within a week or so) for absence missed due to ill health.

Two Year Old Developmental Progress Check: When your child is aged just over two years, we will be sharing with you (having a chat!) a development progress check which looks to a number of key (prime) areas: communication & language, physical development, as well as, personal social & emotional development. This is a statutory initiative and is a part of *The Early Years Foundation Stage*. Sarah will have responsibility for this conversation with you which normally takes about half an hour or so. We have had very positive feedback from those parents who have taken part.

The Nursery Education Grant: Parents will be aware that their children become eligible to benefit from this scheme, commencing from the academic term after they have celebrated their third birthday. Unfortunately, whilst government freely uses language such as 'free 30 hours', it fails to admit that **for those hours we receive less than the operational cost of our provision.** For this reason we have a special flexible hourly rate for attendance outside of NEG term-time.

Bottom line is that fees payable equate to standard fees less the full grant that your child is eligible to receive.

The Nursery Education Grant is split into two 15 hour entitlements (30 hours in total for a maximum of 38 weeks per academic year) – the first fifteen hours (The Universal Entitlement) to which all children are entitled and then the second fifteen hours (The Extended Entitlement) being subject to eligibility criteria. Please speak to Hugh or Jan for further information.

Currently the NEG rate that we receive from County is £4-47 per hour.

Keeping excited children safe: During our nursery day the children are aware of room boundaries, and that we walk instead of running indoors for fear of going 'bump'!

Children are naturally very excited and get a little giddy when their parents arrive at the end of their session to collect them.

Please help us to keep them safe by trying to retain them close to you at this time.

The Principal's Perspective:

Autumn tends to be the point in the annual calendar for introspection and evaluation – the year that's just been, its happenings, occasions and events, the cohort of children who have moved on and looking back over their four years with us and also the year ahead to come, what is planned and possibly forseen. This year's Pre-School leavers have been incredibly generous with their gift to the nursery and the thoughtful, kind words expressed. Their praise has been lavish for the staff and all that they do and all that their children have enjoyed..... - and there lies the conundrum!

Because, the care that these parents and children have desired, received and enjoyed is in some way at odds with the practices that Ofsted requires and demands to be 'Outstanding' in their official view.

What I have always wanted to provide is the environment that allows the very best of carers to spend all their energy and knowledge and love and effort and care and enthusiasm and skill and time with the children in positive and active play, exploration, togetherness, support and development.

Communication, partnership, mutual understanding and knowledge of where a child is on their individual developmental journey is key to enabling parent and setting to work together to further and successfully enhance a child's development, skill base and early years experience.

Combined with the candid daily conversations we have with our parents, the children's individual Tapestry files form an excellent medium to convey this communication and information.

Ofsted however, evermore requires us to record and tabulate and chronicle and photograph and evidence and prepare developmental records to evidence all that we already know in our heads and already express to our parents in our conversations. We employ a full-time staff so that we know our children incredibly well and where they are on their individual developmental journey.

Without doubt, written records have their place, importance and use, however, the blanket mentality of the executive effectively swamps staff with beaurocratic requirements that remove them from actually being with the children, and being with the children is the raison d'être of their work. Writing about what the children have done is detrimental to actually being with the children and doing it!!!!

The ticking of Ofsted boxes, the providing of evidence for inspection and the actual physical providing of "the finest care, the greatest fun, the most encouragement" can be argued to be at times at odds with each other.

Twenty-three years of experience and the caring for over 2,000 children in that time has taught me that children benefit far, far more from a member of staff reading to them, or laughing with them, or conversing with them, than that same member of staff sitting away from the children writing about it pedantically in a document which will in all probability never be ever more than scan read at best.

The fear of Ofsted taking against a setting and downgrading its accreditation because the latest Whitehall beaurocratic hoop or documentative requirement has not been jumped through is one that keeps most settings subservient and equally challenged by the effort of implementing the latest change of thought or new requirement.

As I enter my 24th year of childcare this academic year, I look forward to continuing to do what is most beneficial and rewarding for all and in tune with my philosophy that our mandate for the practice that we provide comes from the families that we serve, their desires and wishes, and the historically proven success and sound preparation of our children when they leave us for Infant school.

Practicing what works, whilst being open to new ideas that are proven, though not trying to repeatedly re-invent the wheel is my continuing way forward.

The Principal's Perspective - continued

Genuinely and passionately caring for our children through a dedicated team of committed, loyal, hand picked 'Pink Ladies', ensuring the children's happiness and welfare at all times, exploring the

new with enthusiasm, spontaneity and love is indeed the 'Ellingham way' though these qualities appear to be low credentials on Ofsted's current 'need to do list'.

Local reception class teachers regularly comment to me that "you can always tell an Ellingham child" and our leaving parents are most gracious with their thank you's and praise as evidenced in the the 'Pre-School Leavers survey questionnaires.

"The finest care, the greatest fun, the most encouragement" not so much a 'mission statement' as a way of life!

Happy (Ellingham) Days!

Hugh

Notes from the P.N. (Sarah Parry- Norton)

What a busy time we have had since the last news letter, life at Ellingham is always eventful , every day is different and wonderful in it's own way. We have welcomed staff returning from maternity leave and some new faces too.

The Baby Unit is thriving and with the addition of the 'new and improved' little play room upstairs we have seen the babies enjoying the delights of sensory play, cosy small group time, we have even had a few 'baby boogie' sessions! The main room has a new ball pool , a jungle soft play area and a variety of new toys. The babies have loved many different topics including Easter, Spring , transport, farm, nursery rhymes and are now currently exploring Autumn themes.

The children in Younger Toddlers, as always, love the fact that they can 'free flow' outside to the soft play area, but having such a hot summer this year, we have used the Gazebo's to great effect creating their very own outdoor playroom! Water play seemed to feature very highly most days along with using the new duplo play boards and chalking areas. Emma and her team have worked tirelessly to create ever more exciting play areas, such as a reading garden, sensory table and role play area.

Following a 'play and toy audit' Older Toddlers have further developed their curriculum allowing children to build on early literacy and mathematical skills including purchasing a range of new resources. The children were also encouraged to ask Lauren for some new toys including a role play house, dolls house and some new trains and dinosaurs, Thank you Mr Brook!

Conservatory have also evaluated their learning environment and now have 'rearranged' their room, this was especially important this year with the heat of the summer. As it continued the children have made the most of being outside in various shady spots in the garden. They have particularly loved playing on the new pirate ship and den building in the woods. Gillian and her team were incredibly fortunate this time last year, every day at around 4.00pm whilst munching on sandwiches , the children were delighted every evening by the most superb starling murmuration . It was breathtaking, and quite a picture to see eighteen little faces looking skyward totally transfixed by this spectacle. This is just one of the many joys of Conservatory, I do hope they return this year!

Pre -School , Wow! What a fabulous year, it always amazes me just how much the children progress in this final year of Ellingham, to see all our little children heading off to

Notes from the P.N. continued

Reception, excitedly chattering about 'big school' . Amy and her team have also evaluated and changed the classrooms, outdoor area and looked closely at the planning side of things, ('argh paper work!') **BUT** with the superb amount of ideas now 'flowing forth' from the children we are now doing much more 'planning in the moment' . This allows us to facilitate the most awesome array of activities, aimed perfectly at allowing the children to learn, always achieve their best and have a huge amount of fun along the way! I am very excited to use our new yurt in the Spring too, thank you so much for your generosity, what a wonderful learning environment for the children.

I am always so proud to show parents around the nursery, as we move towards winter and Christmas I am looking forward to seeing the trees go up, nativity in full force and of course large amounts of glitter arriving to a place near you soon!

Best Wishes.

Sarah

Communication Is Everything!

Sarah and I always wish to provide our parents with the service and care that they desire. Please never hesitate to raise or share any queries or concerns with us and we welcome your feedback and any suggestions you may have.

Outside activities / Naming of clothing

Please remember that the children need to be appropriately dressed for both indoor and outdoor play and for possible changes in the weather during the day. We are keen to spend time outside every day and so it is important that children attend nursery equipped with appropriate fickle "English weather" clothing and spare clothes for any 'accidents' during the day.

Inevitably, some children will have the same or similar articles of clothing or footwear. Staff do their best not to get clothing mixed up, but, dealing with young children is never an exact science, disrobing can be arbitrary or en masse and occasionally unnamed articles may go astray or muddles occur. Please bear with us when they do and **help us by clearly labelling clothing i.e. initials on labels. We will always apologise for 'lost' items of clothing, but in normal circumstances we are unable to forward a refund.**

Spare Clothing: Occasionally children will require to use our Ellingham provided spare clothing, usually when more 'accidents' have occurred than spare clothes provided.

When this occurs, **Please, Please, Please return these loaned Ellingham clothes.**

Additional Attendance:

Please do not hesitate to speak to Sarah or your child's Room Leader if you require an additional day or session and if availability allows we will be happy to oblige.

The 2018 Staff Team:

Hugh Brook (Principal)

Sarah Parry-Norton (Nursery Manager)

Helen Spiller (Deputy Manager)

Assistant Deputies: Gillian Boyes & Zoe Knight

Principal's P.A. & Accounts: Jan Beattie (9-30 a.m. to 3-30 p.m.)

Baby-Unit – Sammy, Hannah, Gemma, Karen, Kimberly, Maddie

Younger Toddlers – Emma, Olivia, Rosie, Helen Gregory

Older Toddlers – Lauren, Lizzie, Maggie

Conservatory – Gillian, Lucy, Gemma

Pre-School – Amy, Jess, Jessica, Gemma

Chef – Reg Chapman

Ancillary – Diane, Doreen, Kim, Natalie, Martha, Lisa

Gardening - Helen W.

Maintenance – Nick Chandler (everything and anything)

& Rod Routen (decorator)

Website & IT Consultant – Mark Ridout – mark@theremarkablebusiness.co.uk

Dates For Your Diary:

Hairdressing:

Tia Webb of Fordingbridge

will next be visiting the nursery on:-

Tuesday 6th November

Tuesday 4th December

Tuesday 8th January

Tuesday 5th February

If you would like your child to receive a haircut, then please either attend the nursery with your child or give instruction to staff member. The charge is £5-00 payable to Tia on the day.

Individual Portrait Photographs:

Tuesday 23rd and Wednesday 24th October

Fraser Portrait Photographers will be attending the nursery on these two days taking studio quality individual photographs of all the children. Ideal Christmas presents for grandparents!

Pre-School Information Evening: Wed. 14th November – 6-00 p.m.

We invite and welcome parents from the Conservatory and Pre-School groups to join us for a presentation and discussion of our curriculum and preparation of our children for Infant School. We will be joined by Mr David Cowie (Yr. R Ringwood Infants) who will be advising parents of what he is expecting of children joining his class in September.

Children's Christmas Parties:

Monday 10th Dec. – Older Toddlers: 3.15 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Tuesday 11th Dec. – Younger Toddlers: 3.15 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Thursday 13th Dec. – Conservatory: 3.15 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Friday 14th Dec. – Pre-School: 3.15 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Baby-Unit Christmas Parents Sing Along: Wed. 12th Dec. 4.00 p.m.

Christmas Carol Service:

Saturday 22nd December at 11-00 a.m. prompt!

St. Mary's And All Saints Church – Ellingham

All invited to our lively traditional service with Pre-School Nativity

Christmas Close: 6-00 p.m. Friday 21st December 2018

Nursery re-opens: 8-00 a.m. Wednesday 2nd January 2019

“Simply idyllic”

“Simply Outstanding”

Ellingham House

***“The finest care, the greatest fun,
the most encouragement”.***

(Since 1995)

Telephone (01425) 473723

email: Hugh - hb@ellinghamhouse.co.uk

Sarah -sarah@ellinghamhouse.co.uk

Jan -

accounts@ellinghamhouse.co.uk