

Stowey bears newsletter

29.03.2021



Half term is here again We have had a very busy term, welcoming back all of our children and lots of new children and families. What has particularly struck us this term is the kindness and consideration shown by all the children towards each other. This has been demonstrated by how the older children have looked after new and younger children, helping them with tasks, playing with them and making them laugh. It has also been seen in the comfort they have given their friends, when they have been sad or hurt themselves. So, a massive well done to all.

Lisa, Sarah, Rachel and Hayley

Where are the bears?

Bears will be hidden around Nether Stowey during the Easter school holidays. Identify each bear and location for the chance to enter a prize draw and win an Easter egg. Entry is free! Entry forms can be collected from Stowey Bears and the Post Office. Good luck!



Winner announced Monday 19th of April!

Book bags- The children will once again be able to borrow books from the setting when we return. Books will be quarantined for 72 hours when returned and before being lent out again.

Lateral flow testing- Stowey bears staff are now being tested twice a week for covid 19, using lateral flow tests. Don't forget that Parents and support bubbles of preschool aged children, also now qualify for the free lateral flow tests. Follow the link to find out more and where to collect your test pack.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff>

Half term arrangements for positive covid 19 cases

Preschool should and will continue to respond to any notifications of positive cases in their school community over the half-term. Therefore, I would like to make you aware of the arrangements to inform us, if your child tests positive for COVID-19 during the half term. Please email the preschool at: stoweybearspreschool@outlook.com. We advise you not to call the preschool number during half term as this will not be monitored. We will then communicate to parents in the usual way if we need to inform you of any closures and isolation periods

Half term challenge- Make some easter egg potato stampers [Handmade Potato Easter Egg Stamps Tutorial for Kids \(premeditatedleftovers.com\)](#)

30 HOURS FUNDING

There are some really important things to remember when you're claiming 30 hours free childcare:

Your code expires every three months and it's up to you to renew it and give it to your childcare provider on time. Renewal isn't automatic and your childcare provider can't renew it for you.

When you receive your eligibility code it will come with an expiration date – you must renew your code by that date in order to keep on claiming your free hours. You can do this by logging into the Childcare Services Account that you were given when you applied for your 30 hours.

If you don't renew your code and give it to your childcare provider every three months, you won't be able to claim your 30 hours free childcare for the whole of the next term. This could lead to you missing out on months of free childcare, so make sure you set up a reminder. The Government should send you a text or email before your personal deadline, but it's always a good idea to put another reminder on your phone and calendar

You should give your new code to your childcare provider as soon as you receive it, to make sure everything goes through in time. The government have warned that things might take longer when lots of people apply at once, and that you should allow time for them to do extra checks if they need to.

<https://www.justchildcare.co.uk/30-hours-free-childcare-faqs/#1533202815733-df7f9b91-38b6>



Tuesday Sessions- After the Easter holidays, we will be opening our Tuesday sessions. We are already full on a Tuesday morning, but we do have a couple of spaces in the afternoon. If you would like to book your child in please email

stoweybearspreschool@outlook.com

Personal belongings- If you would like to take your children's bags, spare clothes, slippers and wellies home during the holidays to check that your child has not outgrown them, please let a member of staff know on the morning of your child's last day.

Next terms topics and themes;

W/c Monday 19th April- Planting and growing; to include, composting, planting sunflowers, cress and strawberries, making seed bombs and sharing the story "The tiny seed"

W/c Monday 26th April- changes- we will be looking at how the things we plant, grow and change, flower dyeing, lifecycles, such as; reading the story of the hungry caterpillar and observing our preschool caterpillars.

W/c Tuesday 4th May- All about me- to include emotions, once again introducing the colour monster. How we are all different, friendships and our families, linking to the story "Elmer the elephant".

W/c Monday 10th May- Our senses; Taste, sight and smell to include trying new foods, healthy eating, I spy, bug hunting, sensory bags.

W/c Monday 17th May- Our senses; Touch and hear- to include mixing mediums, nature rubbing, bare foot bear hunt trail and the story "We're going on a bear hunt"

W/c Monday 24th May- Messy play- lots of messy resources such as cooked spaghetti, gloop, foam, slime making and mud pie. Mark making with different tools and on different surfaces e.g., bread painting, and magic potion making.

Other important calendar dates; April 19th - 30th The big pedal **April 23rd** - St George's day.

COLLECTION PASSWORDS AND PHOTOS

If you have not already done so, could you please send us some collection details for your child? The information required is;

- An up-to-date photograph of the persons whom can collect your child
- The names of whom can collect your child
- A collection password

Photographs and details can be sent via tapestry or email to stoweybearspreschool@outlook.com

A NOTE FROM OUR COMMITTEE

Stowey Bears Team Changes

Following a review of the staffing structure at Stowey Bears by the committee it was agreed to introduce a new Business Manager role which incorporates some of the responsibilities of the financial administrator role, but also adds significant additional responsibilities to ensure the long-term financial viability of Stowey Bears. Whilst the preschool is committee led, with changes of committee membership most years it was felt important to ensure business management capability was within the core team at Stowey Bears to provide continuity and long-term business planning for the charity.

It is only two years ago Stowey Bears unfortunately had to access a sustainability grant from the council just to re-open its doors in September and pay staff wages. A significant amount of work has been undertaken since then, restructuring the business model and accessing grants to bolster funds to ensure Stowey Bears can continue to serve our local community for many years to come. The introduction of this role will help with safeguarding this in the future.

Nicola Rigby, our financial administrator played a significant role in supporting the committee to get Stowey Bears to its current financial stability. With the introduction of the new role Nicola decided this was not for her so sadly Nicola will leave us at the end of this term but we would like to thank her for all of her contribution during the last two years and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

We are delighted to be able to share that Tina Miller has now been appointed as Business Manager for Stowey Bears. Many of you will know Tina from her time covering Lisa's maternity leave as manager so she knows Stowey Bears well and we are confident will be an asset in the new role. The contact email will remain the same for any financial queries stoweybearsfinance@gmail.com and Tina will be in Stowey Bears on Monday and Wednesday mornings to be able to assist you.

Additionally, as a result of lots of new children starting and opening up Tuesdays once again, we will also be advertising for a new Early Years Practitioner to join the team. Initially this will be for 4hrs a week with additional cover where required, but we would hope to be able to increase this in future for the right individual.

We will also be looking for a member of 'bank staff' who may be able to support to cover periods of staff absence etc., sometimes as short notice. Unlike the Early Years Practitioner post, for the bank staff role we would be looking for individuals who have a passion for nurturing children and helping them learn, but it is not essential that they have an early years qualification as they will always be working with other qualified staff at Stowey Bears. The role would ideally be suited to somebody who is not looking for other employment but might enjoy working some days here and there. As a charity we have to ensure every penny counts and all staff must be screened as appropriate which adds significant cost, therefore we would hope that anybody who would like to join the team on this basis was able to make a longer-term commitment.

Term dates-

Easter Holidays

Please take note our last day before easter holidays is Thursday 1st April (due to good Friday being on the 2nd) and we return on Monday 19th April

Bank Holiday Monday 3rd May

Last day Friday 28 May

Summer half term

Last day Friday 28th May returning Monday 7th June

Summer Holidays

Last day 23rd July returning Monday 13th September

Wishing you all a wonderful Easter break!