

## St. Gerard's Newsletter – September 2020

Date	Learning Themes	Sound of the Week	Story of the week	Song of the week
1 - 11 Sept	Getting to Know You Activities	-	Our Favourite Stories	Welcome Songs
14 - 18 Sept	All About Me	-	Shark in the Park	Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes
21 - 25 Sept	All About Me	-	Peace At Last	Roly Poly
28 - 2 Oct	Harvest	-	The Little Red Hen	Old MacDonald
5 - 9 Oct	Autumn	-	Owl babies	Five Little Leaves
12 - 21 Oct	Autumn	-	The Bear Hunt	Teddy Bear Teddy Bear

I am sure you will all agree the last few months have been very challenging for many families, and it is lovely to be able to welcome you back to Sunshines and provide some normality during these strange times. We enjoyed meeting all our key families recently and hope you feel confident about your child coming to pre-school. If you would like more information on how we are supporting children then please visit our website and click on Blogs and Articles where you will find our 'The Recovery Curriculum'.

### **The curriculum**

At the beginning of each term you will be emailed a copy of our newsletter which gives you details of the topics we are covering along with details of our Story of the Week and Song of the Week. If you subscribe to our calendar, you will also receive a notification each week of our topics, stories and songs. We hope this will enable you to support your child's learning at home and talk of them about what they have been learning. The website can be found at [www.sunshinepreschool.org.uk](http://www.sunshinepreschool.org.uk) and the link to subscribe to our calendar can be found here:

<https://sunshinepreschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Subscribing-to-Calendar-Instructions.pdf>

At your next key meeting in November we will give you more information about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum and how we implement it at Sunshines, but in the meantime if you want more information please speak to your child's key person or log on to the DfES website [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications).

### **Tapestry**

Our on-line learning journals have now been set up and all parents have been sent a link to their account. Please check your junk mail if you have not received it and log into the account as soon as possible. This will give you access to observations made on your child and enables you to upload photographs and comments yourself. Your key person will look forward to hearing from you!

### **Home - Pre-school Link**

#### **All About Me**

As we learn more about ourselves through our 'All About Me' topic we would like you to take some photographs of children's favourite things at home and upload them to

Tapestry. This could be a favourite book, a special toy, their pet, or family members etc. We will use the photographs as a focus for small group activities where we show our friends and learn more about each other.

### **Celebrations**

As we learn more about ourselves we will also be exploring children's different home cultures, so if your family has any special cultural celebrations that are different to traditional English customs, or specific ways of celebrating, please let us know so we can include them in our planning.

### **Harvest**

To celebrate the English festival of Harvest children are invited to bring in small food items for our Harvest table. We will pass on any donations to Counterslip Food bank. Please bring any food donations in during the weeks of **28th Sept – 2nd Oct.**

### **Natural Resources**

During our Autumn topic we will be looking at seasonal changes in our world and we will be using lots of natural resources to enhance learning. If you are out and about and find conkers, leaves, fir cones or anything else that you think children would be interested in then please bring them into pre-school for us to use.

**Please note as part of our Covid procedures any items brought into pre-school will either be sanitised or quarantined before children are exposed to them.**

### **Out and About in the Community**

As you are probably aware, at present we are unable to make visits into the community and we will advise parents when this changes.

### **New Staff**

Ruth left Sunshines over the summer to develop her career and we are currently recruiting for a new lunchtime supervisor to cover Monday and Wednesday. We are very excited to be welcoming Racheal Nutt to our staff team from the end of September. Rachael has a wealth of experience as an Early Years Practitioner and being a Special Needs Support assistant and will be a great asset to our existing team.

### **Key Person Meetings**

Meetings will be arranged for all children next term (9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> Nov) to update parents on how children have settled in and their progress so far.

### **Packed Lunches**

A reminder to parents that as part of our healthy eating policy we respectfully request that children do not bring chocolate bars or sweets in their lunch box. If children bring grapes, olives or tomatoes they need to be cut in half **lengthways** to avoid choking hazards. Please do not send in drinks as we provide drinks at lunchtime.

### **Hygiene**

To prevent lunchtime staff having to handle children's food please make sure packets are opened and fruit is prepared ready for children to eat. Children need to be able to open containers so they can be as independent as possible.

## **Food Allergies**

As we have some children with severe allergies, we need parents to adhere to the following procedures throughout the year: No nuts of any kind, no peanut butter or Nutella in sandwiches and no pots of pesto or hummus. Pesto, hummus and mayonnaise can be used in sandwiches (this is because it is contained and less likely to spill onto furniture in significant quantities to cause a problem). In order to keep all children safe we thank you for your cooperation, but if you would like to discuss our procedures then please do not hesitate to speak to one of the team.

## **Celebrating Birthdays**

We are happy for children to bring in one large cake or small cakes to share with friends to celebrate a birthday or special occasion. Due to current circumstances we can no longer share home made cakes but can accept shop bought cakes that are wrapped.

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Please use the **pre-school mobile number 07798672609** to report absences, check how your child is, or inform us if anyone different is collecting your child. Do not ring the landline number or email, as messages are not regularly picked up. 0117 9774170 is the number for queries regarding sessions, fees or out of hours information.

**Emergency Contact Numbers** - Please ensure that you are always available on the emergency contact number you have given us. We must **always** be able to get hold of someone in the event of an emergency. If you are not going to be available on the number you have given then please notify us when dropping off your child.

**Coats - Every child must bring an outdoor coat with them to every session.** We use the outdoor environment every day sometime for long periods and children need to be warm and dry. The British weather is very unpredictable so even on sunny days we may need it!

**Arriving at Pre-school** - We would be really grateful if you could remove your child's coat and hand it to the staff member at the door so we can hang it straight up. This means we can get children in a bit quicker and not delay parents.

## **A few reminders for your information:**

**Welcome Book** – The Welcome Book is available on-line

<https://sunshinepreschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Welcome-Prospectus-St.-Gerards-2020-2021.docx.pdf> and contains important information about term dates, contact numbers etc that you may need to refer to. This is worth checking as our terms do not always coincide with local schools.

**Toys from home** – At the moment children are not able to bring in any items from home without prior permission.

**Spare clothes bags** – As mentioned at your key meeting please make sure bags contain at least 3 **FULL** sets of clothes and a spare pair of shoes.

**Clothing** – in order to help children be as independent as possible when using the toilet please could they wear suitable clothing such as leggings and jogging bottoms and not trousers with buttons or belts. Ideally shoes should have Velcro fastenings and be closed in to prevent trip hazards.

**Pre-school Fees** – Please note pre-school fees need to be paid **during the first week of the month** (unless you are paying by childcare credits). Bills have been late this month as we confirm details from the grant forms, but will normally be given on the first day of the month. If you are unable to pay at the beginning of the month or have any queries regarding your fees please ring Don on 0117-9774170 or 07905791950.

**Term Dates** – Please check the on-line calendar of our website for term dates and note we do not always run to the same dates as local schools.

### **INSET TRAINING DAY**

Pre-school will be closed on **Friday 9th October**  
to allow staff to update their first aid training.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

***A very big thank you from the team for all your support with these matters and we look forward to getting to working with you over the coming year.***