



Footsteps St. Andrew's Church Playgroup
Graves Street, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 4GE
Telephone: 07967 714534

News and Information 1st November 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

THEMES

Our themes this half term are:

- **Autumn**
We will talk about hedgehogs, owls and other nocturnal animals. This will involve lots of creative activities - making pictures with varied resources and the leaves and twigs the children have been collecting on their way to Footsteps or when visiting a park.
- **Bonfire Night**
We have been talking to the children about firework safety and the organised family events they may be going to. They have been making their own firework picture by drizzling glue and then sprinkling the glitter on top of the glue to make it sparkle or dipping a partly sliced cardboard tube into paints to make splats on their pictures.
- **Remembrance Day**
Child friendly **Remembrance** Service - Our vicar, Jo, is holding a short service for **ALL** our children and parents/carers at St. Andrew's Church on Monday 12th November 2018 at 9am. Please bring your child to Church on this morning. You are more than welcome to stay and enjoy the service with us. We would appreciate your help to escort those children who are with us for a Monday morning session back over to Footsteps at approximately 9.45am that would be fantastic. Thank you.
- **Letters and Sounds**
This half term we have introduced some of the nursery aged children to Phase 1 of this program. They have been learning new songs and listening to music and sounds in the environment to help develop their listening skills. Lots of the new children have shown interest too and wanted to take part in the activities. We will be encouraging all children to make their own musical instruments (Please bring in any **long** cardboard tubes from home).

You can help at home if your child wants to join in by following some of the ideas below. Please let us know on Tapestry if you have tried any of these ideas.

Ways you can support your children at home: talking and listening

- **Make time to listen to your child talking** - as you meet them from their setting or school, as you walk, or travel home by car, in the supermarket as you shop, at meal times, bath times, bedtimes - any time!
- **Switch off the TV, radio and mobile phones** - and really listen!
- **Show that you are interested in what they are talking about** - look at your child, smile, nod your head, ask a question or make a response to show that you really have been listening.
- **Make a collection of different toy creatures** - for example, a duck, a snake, an alien, say the sound it might make as you play together, for example, 'quack-quack', 'sssssss', 'yuk-yuk', and encourage your child to copy you.

- **Listen at home** - switch off the TV and listen to the sounds, both inside and outside the home. Can your child tell you what sounds they heard, in the order in which they heard them?
- **Play-a-tune** - and follow me! Make or buy some simple shakers, drums and beaters, then play a simple tune and ask your child to copy. Have fun!
- **Use puppets** and toys to make up stories or retell known ones. Record your child telling the story and play it back to them.

CHILDREN IN NEED - Friday 16th November 2017

On Friday morning 16th November and Monday 19th November during the morning and afternoon sessions we will be having 'Teddy Bears Picnics' and we would like all children to bring a Teddy Bear and silver pennies to put in the 'Pudsey Bear Box' to make a donation to Children in Need. We will talk to the children and let them know that Pudsey Bear is a bear who collects lots of pennies to buy special toys for poorly children! The Aunties will be wearing Pudsey T shirts and the children are invited to wear something spotty if they would like to. Last year some of the children wore homemade spotty t-shirts which looked great and were inexpensive. We will be having a picnic (details to follow once steps are in place to eradicate any risk to children with allergies).

*If your child attends Footsteps on Monday and Friday can you please make sure that they bring a Teddy on **each day**. **Please put a label on your child's teddy with their own name on it**. If your child does not attend on these days please speak to Auntie Karen or Auntie Michelle as soon as possible to make arrangements to come a different day if possible.

CHILD LEARNING JOURNEYS - TAPESTRY ON-LINE

Thank you to all those parents/carers who have logged on and given us feedback on your child's learning and development. This is an essential 2 way partnership which will enable us to work together to plan for your own child's next steps. Please let us know if you are having any problems with the way it works or need a new password for access. We have added lots of photos and characteristics of effective learning assessments to give us their baseline assessment for those children who started with us in September 2018. Thank you to those parents who have returned their highlighted copy of where you feel your child is secure at on the tracking document we sent home. We are now concentrating more on your child's next steps and will be adding wow moments and significant learning which will mean less photos but over the course of the year you will see lots of memories posted on there. We love to see your **pictures and comments** added to it too!

3 YEAR OLD FUNDING

If your child's 3rd birthday falls between 1st September and 31st December 2018 your child will be eligible to claim 3 year old funding from January 2018. Please check if you could be eligible for 30 hours - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare>. We ask that you bring in their birth certificate and see myself or Auntie Michelle to check the child's birth date to enable the information to be processed so we can access the funding for you. If you do require additional hours or wrap around care including lunch cover please make sure we have your child on the register. We will try our best to accommodate requests for additional hours where possible but places do get booked up early and are not always available. Thank you.

Cont/d...

FAMILY BOOKS

Most of the children have now begun to settle well with us and it would be beneficial to your child if they had something at Footsteps that was familiar to them. We would like each child to make a book about themselves and their family. Please could your child bring in a small photograph of themselves and photographs of members of their own family, i.e. parents, siblings, grandparents, pets (approximately 6 or 7 photos of 3 x 5 size). These books will help reassure your child and begin to form a strong link with Footsteps and their home life. These books will be kept in the book area for your child to look at and share with the Aunties and their friends. You may have already seen this request in the letter 'What to expect when my child starts at Footsteps' they took home on their start date. The children returning to us this year may already have a family book but if they haven't and you would like to send in the photos we would love to make the books with the children.

BAGS IN THE ENTRANCE HALL

Please note that all children have access to the entrance hall so they can access their coat pegs and this means they also have access to bags which may contain medication or carrier bags. Please hand all **prescribed medicines** to an Auntie to be kept out of reach in the kitchen area in a medication box. Please note that we cannot give children calpol at Footsteps unless it is prescribed by your family doctor. If it is a recent prescription we require our medication book to be completed before we can administer the medicine. Please ensure children have a warm, hooded coat that zips up and gloves to keep them warm when playing outside in colder weather.

Please hand any **wows, snacks or letters** to us in the mornings as we will not know they are in the children's bags initially. Thank you.

AUNTIES ACHIEVEMENTS

I have great pleasure in informing you that the Aunties at Footsteps embrace the training opportunities offered to them to develop their own professional practice in caring for your children. Recent training completed includes:

Paediatric First Aid Training	- Auntie Karen and student Maddie
First Aid at Work	- Aunties Michelle and Louise R
Safeguarding children - Group 3	- Aunties Louise R and parent helper Linda
SENDCO network training	- Aunties Karen, Michelle and Yvette
Designated Safeguarding Lead	- Auntie Michelle
The BIG Ofsted Conversation network	- Auntie Karen
On entry to School moderation event	- Auntie Karen
Epi-pen training by local community nurse	- Aunties Michelle, Yvette, Louise, Sheila, Louise R, Ella

All staff are regularly updated on safeguarding children and any changes in policy (Staff meeting 21st September 2018)

All staff have shown such dedication and commitment in raising standards for the children in our care and I am very proud of them all.

Yours sincerely
Karen Ramsay, Playgroup Leader