

As the weather brightens, vaccinations roll out and lockdown restrictions start to lift, I've been reflecting on the past year.



As you know, preschool had been open throughout the pandemic and these have been very scary times for everyone here - with unpredictable track and trace isolations, PPE shortages, rigorous new hygiene regimes and overwhelming guidance bombardments, Our ethos of outdoor learning and the Forest School has certainly come into its own! The numerous messages of gratitude and appreciation we've received have been a great support for us and I'd like to thank all the parents and especially our truly dedicated staff for their stoic resilience during these bewildering times. Our tribe have been a brilliant team and your children have picked up on their naturally caring, comforting and cheerful disposition, building their resilience and emotional wellbeing. 'Proud' doesn't begin to describe how I feel about how our tribe have responded to the challenges and your children have all been little heroes. Our preschool 'bubble' has just been the best.

Although still bound by lockdown restrictions at the moment, you'll read in this newsletter that we have a packed agenda this term, culminating in the liaisons with local schools and managing the transition of our older children to their next steps. A very emotional time for us all. I hope you all enjoy your time with us over the next few months and, as always, if you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

Andrea

### Hot Lunches return from June !

We are delighted to announce that, with effect from 7 June (after the half term holiday) we will be able to supply hot lunches for the children.

We have a new supplier, HC3S, which is part of Hampshire County Council, and they have been selected as the new caterers at the primary school on campus.

We will operate a 3 week rolling menu and fresh bread and seasonal vegetables will be provided with each meal.

The price will be £3.50 per meal and an order form with menu will be emailed shortly. The order form is also now on the website on the Parents Page/Forms.



### Parents Open Evening—Wednesday 7 July 2021 6.30—8.30pm

Appreciating it's been a long time since we've been able to welcome parents into Preschool and have face to face meetings, we're going to have an Open Evening!

This will be for parents only and all the staff will be on hand to chat. There'll be tours of Forest School and refreshments and a raffle too. Watch out for more details.

**Book Now!** Half Term Holiday Club  
1—4 June 2021  
For children aged 2 - 6




<b>Half day</b> 8am - 12noon / 12noon - 4pm 	<b>Full day</b> 8am - 4pm 
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## I help children communicate—what's your super power?

You may have seen Gosia's weekly posts on Facebook—I'd like to explain a little about how fantastic it is that we have her as a member of our Tribe.

Gosia is our Communication Support Assistant and as well as being a Level 3 Early Years Educator, she is Level 3 qualified in British Sign Language (BSL). Using BSL with young children, regardless of their communication ability, enhances language and listening skills and works towards reducing frustrations associated with the inability of young children to express themselves or comprehend situations.

Signing with all the children (and staff) in a range of interests and environments in the setting opens the door to the understanding of different languages and methods of communication.



## Pupdate

We are so excited to introduce our new tribe member to you all. Indi the fox red Labrador will start her training as a therapy dog in May.

Assisted by the charity Helpful Hounds, ([helpfulhounds.org.uk](http://helpfulhounds.org.uk)) our aim is to provide emotional support and comfort for all children and staff.

Therapy dogs are increasingly recognised as being good for our mental health, helping alleviate stress and anxiety.



## Keeping safe, sharing knowledge

Andrea (Safeguarding Lead) and Sarah-Jayne (Deputy Safeguarding Lead) have undertaken 'Train the Trainer' training for Safeguarding. All early years practitioners are required to attend Safeguarding Update training every two years to comply with the requirements of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and this new qualification means that we can undertake all safeguarding update training inhouse. We will also be able to offer training to our network of local early years settings!



## Psychological First Aid

Over the past year, we have all been through the highs and lows of lockdown and the effects of coronavirus have been tough. I have recently completed a course on psychological first aid, which means I can help people that are having practical, emotional or social difficulties. If you need links to find the right support then I am here to listen without judgement.

For advice for parents and children, you may find the following websites helpful:

[www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-child-matters](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-child-matters) and [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)

If you would like further support then please contact me, Sarah-Jayne using the email address [potleyhill.preschool@yahoo.com](mailto:potleyhill.preschool@yahoo.com) or call 01252 869844.

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**“Caring for others is important, but COVID-19 taught us that sometimes, by caring for yourself, you're caring for others too”**

- Becca Kaye

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# Committee news



Hi there!!

Welcome back to you all & I hope you had a lovely Easter break despite the slight variations of weather!?! (Snow in April?!). For those of you just starting your journey here, welcome and I hope you and your child/ren enjoy your time here at Preschool.

I am Ella, Chair of the Preschool Committee. Both of my children have attended here and my youngest, Isla still attends 4 days a week; so you may see me at drop off and pick ups! The Committee has a very important role as the Preschool is a charity run setting so without our lovely Committee and all your fundraising efforts we wouldn't be able to open our doors. It's a big team effort & we are very fortunate to have a brilliant bunch of both parents and trustees too.

If you haven't already, make sure you have joined our Parents Page on Facebook (Parents of Potley Hill Early Years) for updates etc. The Easter Bonnet efforts were brilliant & it was really lovely to see all the gorgeous photos of your little ones proudly wearing their creations! Thank you all for getting involved. It was great!

As we are finally getting a bit of freedom back, we are feeling hopeful that some, if not all of our summer events should be able to take place & we can hopefully say goodbye to the virtual world of events! Keep a look out for a list of our upcoming fundraisers via email and our parents page. It is very exciting as it means we can finally get to meet some of the lovely families we haven't had a chance to properly say hello to!

Whilst I have your attention, I would just like to thank you all for your continued support during these bizarre times. Lockdown has taken its toll on most businesses and families so we really are grateful for your continued support with our events/activities to keep the fundraising going the best we can.

That's all from me for now, I really hope to be able to put some faces to names in the not so distant future with some fun Summer fundraiser events taking place! Looking forward to seeing you all soon enough.

Take care & stay safe,

Ella xx

## April

### **Bag2School Clothes and Textiles Recycling Collection Day**

**Friday 30 April 2021**

We collect all types of unwanted textiles—see the website for a full list. [Bag2school.com](http://Bag2school.com)

## June

### **Toddle Waddle—Thursday 10 June 2021, 12.30pm**

Sponsored Toddle Waddle on the field for all children. Parents can come along at 2pm. Proceeds will be split between Preschool and Helping Hounds

### **Photographer—Monday 28 June 2021**

Kevin from Captured Moments will come into Preschool to take photographs of all the children. (Those not normally attending on a Monday can be brought in at 11am or 2pm to have their photographs taken too.)



### **T-towel Memento—Friday 18 June 2021 deadline for orders**

Watch out for the order form—coming soon !  
A lovely memento featuring the handprints of all the children at Preschool.

## July

### **Parent DIY Day—Saturday 3 July 2021 10am—12noon**

Come along, meet other parents, and help the staff spruce up Preschool and Forest School.

Friday 30 April	Bag2School Recycling Collection
Tuesday 1 June - Friday 4 June	HALF TERM—Holiday Club open— <b>Book Now !</b>
Thursday 10 June	Toddle Waddle sponsored event supporting Helping Hounds
Friday 11 June	INSET Day—PRESCHOOL CLOSED
Friday 18 June	Deadline for T-Towel orders
Monday 28 June	Photographer (11am and 2pm for non attendees)
Saturday 3 July	Parent DIY day
Wednesday 7 July	Parents Open Evening (6.30—8.30pm)
Thursday 22 July	Last Day of Preschool for those returning in September
Friday 23 July	Last Day of Preschool for leavers. Ad Hoc available 11.30am Graduation Ceremony and Picnic on the field

**Don't forget you can always check our online calendar for dates.**

### Important Reminders

- ◆ Clothing—even if your child isn't going to Forest School, we spend a lot of time outdoors, so please make sure they have a sunhat, long sleeved tops and trousers with closed toe shoes—please no crocs - and a coat if it's cold!
- ◆ Please make sure you apply sunscreen to your children before their session. We will top up with our own sunscreen during the session as necessary. They will also need to have bug repellent applied to avoid ticks and bites.
- ◆ Wet or soiled clothes will be sent home in a fabric, reusable tote bag. Could you please wash and return tote bags as soon as possible. If you have a surplus of tote bags at home, we are always happy to receive donations.
- ◆ Snack—please send in one piece of whole fruit or vegetable. You do not need to put it in a bag as all the snacks are washed.

**Please check all your child's clothing and belongings to make sure that they are clearly named.**

**It means more time for play and avoids confusion if we can quickly identify all their bits and pieces.**