

Silks Farm Nursery School

Setting the standards by which other nurseries follow!

NURSERY MATTERS

5th Edition, Spring 2006

Introduction

In this bumper edition of *Nursery Matters* you will find an array of articles which include fund raising for charity, sponsorship in our local community, internet for children, room topics, results from the Silks Strikers™ football programme and

even yoga for parents! We hope you find this newsletter to be informative and fun to read. If there is a topic that we have not covered but you think it ought to be included, please let us know. After all this is your newsletter.

Events and Activities

Fund Raising

Each year Silks Farm Nursery School actively participates in raising money for Children in Need, last year was no exception. With the number of events that took place and contributions from friends, parents and carers we raised almost £700. A great result - thanks to everyone who helped! The main events that took place were:

Guess the number of sweets in the jar

The winner of this draw held on Friday 18th November was Tom McLaren. Tom who has recently left Silks Farm for primary school guessed the exact amount of sweets. He went away with a beaming smile as he claimed his jar of 200 sweets. Perhaps he might let Jack his little brother, a current 'Silks Farmer', have a few?

Dress up day

Children and brave staff dressed up in pyjamas for the day on 16th November. Everyone who took part made a donation of 50p, contributing to the overall amount raised for Children in Need.

Raffle

Between 7th & 17th November '05, parents/carers were busily buying raffle tickets at 20p each, with the hope of winning the superb homemade Pudsey Bear shaped cake. The winner of the draw, which was held on the 18th November, was Lizzie Wilson from the Baby Room. Runners up were Louis Cobb (Little Nursery) with a bottle of red and white wine, and Tegan Turner who collected a yummy box of chocolates.

In this issue.

- On-line education developmental games to be introduced
- Football trial a great success
- Yoga programme for mums introduced
- Fund raising success (over £4,000 raised during 2005)
- Investments and support for local community

Events and Activities

Cake Stall

We were very lucky when one of our parents Martyn Rossiter-Houldsworth, who used to be a pastry chef, volunteered to make us a gourmet strawberry gateau. It was no surprise that we raised £22 from this cake alone. Nevertheless, we received a tremendous amount of support from both staff and parents/carers, who made or bought in cakes. All your contributions were most appreciated - thank you.

Pudsey Bear Drawing Competition

Children from the Baby & Toddler Rooms were given a picture of Pudsey Bear to colour, whilst the older children were asked to show off their artistic skills by drawing their own Pudsey Bear. The competition was over a 10-day period, finishing on the 17th November '05. The winners of the competition were:

Category	Name
Overall Winner	Lizzie Wilson
Baby Room	Lizzie Wilson
Little Nursery	Lily Edgar
Big Nursery	Jack McLaren
Early Years - Yellow Room	Adam Duck
Early Years - Blue Room	Kimberley Webster

Penalty Shootout

A special thanks goes to Mark Dowling, parent and Silks Farm's FA coach, who arranged this event. The penalty shootout took place during the Silks Strikers™ 8 session football programme. The Early Years children who took part in this programme, took five penalties. Their results (and yes they all scored five goals) were recorded on a certificate issued by Silks Farm Nursery School and signed by both Selina Swaby and Mark Dowling. This was a popular event raising over £200.

2005 Nativity Play - Birth of baby Jesus

With a majority of parents attending from the Early Years Rooms, superb performances from the children, 2005's nativity play was a resounding success. Based upon a shortened version of *The story of Jesus* where Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem, the performers of the show were:

Nativity Play Characters	Children Stars of the Show!
Mary	Lucy Hickson
Joseph	Daniel McKay
Inn Keeper	Ellis Coppolaro
Angel	Lucy Nugent
Lamb	Kira Chantler
Donkey	Luke Clarke
Shepherd	George Terry
Wise Man	George White
Wise Man	Michael Dowling
Wise Man	Morgan Batty
Singers	Rest of the children in Early Years Rooms

After the show, all the performers were treated to a special 'well done' party arranged by Laura-Jayne Norman who produced and directed the play. Thanks to all the parents/carers who turned up to support the children.

Christmas Party

A great time was had by all! The children played pass the parcel, musical statues and a variety of other games and dance competitions. After burning off all their energy, the children were treated to a feast of yummy food such as pizza, sausages rolls, chicken pieces, savoury snacks, carrots, cucumber and plenty of fresh fruit. They all wore party hats and had 'safe' party poppers and crackers.

Events and Activities (continued)

Room News

Baby & Toddler Rooms

The children from both Baby & Toddler Rooms have been thoroughly enjoying their visit to Silks Farm Nursery School's private Nature Park. Set in 3 acres of natural growth, the children and staff walk along the cut trail (babies in push chairs) through the park, usually twice a day, weather permitting. The trip can take up to 50 minutes to complete. It is a great opportunity for the babies and toddlers to socialise, experiencing the abundant wild life including rabbits, birds, various insects, discovering molehills and having lots of fun!



Currently the children are being taught about the different clothes they need to wear when it's cold, windy or wet. As part of the current weather topic, the children have been learning about clouds, rain, sun, rainbows and have been painting, colouring or sticking coloured tissue paper onto weather templates (e.g. clouds and sun). These templates are subsequently cut out by staff and displayed in the nursery.

Little Nursery



Little Nursery's current topic is about colour. Each week a colour is chosen and explored in a fun way. Recently the children were tasked with finding anything in their room that was orange and placing the item in a 'Treasure Basket'. Later the children collectively discussed what they had found.

The next topic will be introduced on 20th February, finishing on 31st March, and will be about 'Myself'. As part of exploring this topic the children will be looking at photographs of themselves. They will also make a 'height chart', where the children will be able to compare how tall they are.

Big Nursery

Following the same theme as Little Nursery, the children from Big Nursery have been mixing paints to produce different colours. They have also been exploring a variety of fruit and vegetables with different textures and colours.

As with Little Nursery the next topic will be about 'Myself'. The children in Big Nursery will be encouraged to be more independent which will include dressing, brushing hair and cleaning teeth. They will also learn why some people need glasses or hearing aids, and why people from around the world have different coloured hair and skin.

Early Years

The Early Years children have been learning about different cultures. As part of this theme and with support from staff, the children made a global map, highlighting various places throughout the world. The children have been learning about where and how people live. For example, we live in brick houses, whereas Chinese people may live in houses made of wood. We use knives and forks to eat, native Africans use their fingers like a 'flat spoon'.



At the moment the children have been learning about the Chinese New Year, including the Chinese calendar system. They have also enjoyed making three-dimensional Chinese lanterns and paper dragons.

Events and Activities (continued)

Chinese Calendar 2006 Year of The Dog



Chinese Year	Zodiac Animal	Gregorian Calendar
4693	Boar	January 31, 1995
4694	Rat	February 19, 1996
4695	Ox	February 7, 1997
4696	Tiger	January 28, 1998
4697	Hare/Rabbit	February 16, 1999
4698	Dragon	February 5, 2000
4699	Snake	January 24, 2001
4700	Horse	February 12, 2002
4701	Ram/Sheep	February 1, 2003
4702	Monkey	January 22, 2004
4703	Rooster	February 9, 2005
4704	Dog	January 29, 2006
4705	Boar	February 18, 2007
4706	Rat	February 7, 2008
4707	Ox	January 26, 2009
4708	Tiger	February 10, 2010
4709	Hare/Rabbit	February 3, 2011
4710	Dragon	January 23, 2012
4711	Snake	February 10, 2013
4712	Horse	January 31, 2014
4713	Ram/Sheep	February 19, 2015
4714	Monkey	February 9, 2016
4715	Rooster	January 28, 2017
4716	Dog	February 16, 2018
4717	Boar	February 5, 2019
4718	Rat	January 25, 2020

On the 6th February the nursery held a Chinese Tea, giving the children first hand experience of using chop sticks and Chinese food, such as prawn crackers, noodles, rice, chicken with black bean and sweet & sour sauces. They all thought this was very yummy!

Supermarket Vouchers

For those of you who don't know, nurseries can collect school vouchers too. So if you do not need them, or have any older children at

school, please think of us.

Tesco

For the parents/carers who donated vouchers last time your help is greatly appreciated. With your support Silks Farm managed to collect 5,705 Tesco vouchers, enabling us to order everything that was on each Room Teachers' 'wish list'. We look forward to receiving an array of goodies shortly, which include:

An Activity Chest - contains 63 different activity play items such as skittles, rubber rings, balls and cones.

Pack of 20 assorted coloured beanbags.

Pack of 6 dancing rings each with ribbons attached to aid visual impact when dancing.

Pack of 12 fleece easy catch balls.

2 pop-up tunnels.

A set of 10 brightly coloured detachable walking pieces (build your own balancing beam).

Sainsburys

Child obesity and the general decline in kids' activities are growing concerns in the UK. In response, Sainsbury's developed the Active Kids campaign in 2005, to inspire children and encourage teachers to become more active.

Last year, as a result, almost 24,000 schools benefited from an incredible £17m worth of Active Kids equipment.

Some alarming facts!

Inactive children will grow up to be at greater risk of heart attacks, strokes and high blood pressure than active children (Source: Sainsburys website).

Type 2 diabetes (previously called maturity-onset) is now being seen in school children who are obese. Previously it was only seen in middle aged and older people (Source: Health Survey England 2001).

Inactive children are at risk of suffering from

Thanks to you we managed to collect 5,705 Tesco vouchers

Events and Activities (continued)

poorer self-esteem, greater anxiety and higher stress levels than active children (Source: NHS Health, Scotland).

Active Kids '06

From 8th February to May '06 you will be able to collect Active Kids vouchers in a number of ways. Here's how:

Earn one Active Kids voucher for every £10 spent

at any Sainsbury's store. As an added bonus, one extra Active Kids voucher is earned for every £10 spent on 'apple stamped' products and or/all fresh fruit and vegetables.

You are also able to convert 500 Nectar points into 50 Active Kids vouchers by simply visiting the Nectar website. Visit www.nectar.com to see how this works.

Nursery Developments

Information Technology & Communications

We are currently in the process of introducing broadband internet access to the nursery and making this facility available, via a wireless connection, to the children in Little, Big and Early Years Rooms. With a secure firewall and security systems in place, the children will be able to explore educational sites and play on-line developmental games in a safe and secure environment. We will keep you posted on the development of this project.

French Times™



Working in conjunction with Clare Mackinnon (qualified French Teacher), and complementing the government's Early Years Foundation

Stage Curriculum, Silks Farm Nursery School created the unique French Times™ programme which enables children as young as 3 years of age to learn and absorb French in a fun way. This programme has been operating since October '04 and continues to be very popular with parent/carers as places are always full.

Silks Strikers™



During October and November '05, working closely with Mark Dowling (qualified FA coach) with input from the Hunts FA, Silks Farm Nursery School ran an 8 week football trial for both

boys and girls in the Early Years Rooms. The purpose of this trial was to gauge the practicality of introducing planned football sessions to young children, where they would benefit physically, educa-

tionally, learn basic football techniques and have lots of fun. Twenty-two boys and girls took part in the trial that proved to be a tremendous success. The results of the Football Trial Feedback Questionnaire speak for themselves.

	Question	Results
1	Did your child enjoy the football sessions?	Every parent/carer said yes.
2	Do you think it is more beneficial for Silks Farm Nursery School to have an FA coach taking these sessions?	91% of parents preferred an FA coach taking the sessions.
3	What do you think about the quality and contents of the session sheets?	82% rated the quality and contents of the session sheets between good to excellent. The remaining parents/carers thought that these sheets were not necessary.
4	Would you like Silks Farm Nursery School to continue with football in the new year, if not please give your reasons?	Every parent/carer said yes.
5	Overall, what do you think about Silks Farm Nursery School offering football? Please tick as appropriate.	91% + 9% 0% 0% 0% -

Nursery Developments (continued)

As we move into spring and the weather begins to improve, the Silks Strikers™ programme will 'kick off' again. In the meantime, the nursery is looking to send some members of staff on FA football coaching courses, in order to strengthen this programme even further.

Yoga

The 'core yoga group' consists of members of staff who have completed Phase 1 & 2 yoga programmes devised by Beverley Nolan with input from Silks Farm Nursery School. As from January '06, yoga has been incorporated into weekly room plans across the nursery, which means that babies through to children in the Early Years Rooms have been experiencing yoga through a variety of ways including dance, stories and role play.



THE BRITISH WHEEL OF
YOGA

Beverley Nolan has been a yoga practitioner for more than 20 years, and in 1986 she completed teacher training in the Iyengar tradition. Beverley is also an Accredited Teacher with the British Wheel of Yoga, and also practices ante natal and post natal using the 'Birthlight' approach.

In conjunction with Beverley, Silks Farm Nursery School is pleased to announce the launch of 'Silks Mums Yoga Program'. Designed specifically for ladies throughout all stages of pregnancy, these sessions are most beneficial for your well-being, preparing the body for birth. Post natal programs are also available to assist your body recover from the trauma of birth.

Sessions are to be held on Tuesdays at the Complementary Health Centre in St. Ives (Armes Corner near Vindis garage). Subject to demand, sessions may also be held on other days of the week. Courses are in blocks of 6 one hour sessions (to be taken within an 8 week period). With 25% off the standard rate, the 'Silks Mums Yoga Programme' represents exceptional value at £36. Course groups are small with a maximum of up to 8 attendees.

From 26th March for 8 weeks, Somersham Town Youth FC will be running a junior football academy for children under 6 years of age.

For further information, please contact Beverley Nolan directly on Tel: 01487 842241 or 07957 250619. If after speaking with Beverley, you would like to attend the 'Silks Mums Yoga Programme', please advise Selina Swaby or Debbie Spenceley who will issue you with a 'Silks Mums Yoga Programme' voucher. This voucher will entitle you to receive your preferential rate.

Sponsorship

Somersham Road roundabout

Working in partnership with Cambridge County Council, Silks Farm Nursery School agreed to fund the maintenance and up-keep of the A1123/B1040 Somersham Road roundabout (near the petrol station, formerly Q8). If you have seen our signs, please tell us what you think!

Somersham Town Youth FC

In October '05 Ed Procter, a former Silks Farm parent, spearheaded the formation of the Somersham Town Youth FC. The club currently has 20 children registered between the ages of 4 & 6, and training sessions are held on Sunday mornings at Somersham Town FC's grounds, between 9.30am - 11.00am.

The club is in the process of expanding, and would like to invite any children from Reception age through to Year 2 to come along. So if you have any older children that might be interested in playing football, give Mark Chaplin (a current Silks Farm parent), or any of the other contacts listed overleaf a call. We are sure that they will be pleased to hear from you.

As one of the main sponsors of the club and to assist with its development, Silks Farm Nursery School has agreed to fund the purchase of the club jackets. This is another example of how we support our local community.

To learn more, please visit www.clubwebsite.co.uk/somershamtownyouthfc or speak to any of the con-

Nursery Developments (continued)

tacts listed below:

Coach — Steve Townsend, 01487 740352
Chair — Andy Millar, 01487 842541
Treasurer — Mark Chaplin, 01487 841573

Secretary — Ed Procter, 01487 841021
Committee — Alan Papworth, 01487 843379
Committee — Harvey Jackson, 01487 823227

Chef's Recipe

In this newsletter you will find the recipe to Pam's popular Tuna Macaroni. As always, before you start to make this dish, please check that no members of your family are allergic to any of the ingredients listed in this recipe.

Tuna Macaroni - serves 4 people

225 to 275g (8 to 10oz) macaroni
 50g (2oz) butter
 50g (2oz) plain flour
 150ml ($\frac{1}{4}$ pint) milk
 100 to 175g (4 to 6oz) grated cheese
 198g (7oz) tin tuna drained and flaked



In boiling water add a pinch of salt. Add macaroni and cook until tender then rinse and drain.

Meanwhile melt butter in a saucepan, sprinkle over the flour and cook whilst stirring for about 2 minutes, gradually stir in the milk and bring to the boil. Turn down the heat, simmer, and continue to stir until thickened adding most of the cheese until melted.

Cover the bottom of a suitable ovenproof dish with the flaked tuna, then cover the tuna with macaroni and finish by covering the dish with cheese sauce. Scatter the remaining cheese on the top and bake in a moderate oven (about 175° to 200°c) for

25 to 30 minutes. Serve and enjoy - Voilà!

Staff Matters

Starters

Anita Abey returns from maternity leave to take charge of Big Nursery.

Laura Cornwall joins us in June after completing her NVQ3 in childcare.

Kelly Norman, joins the team on a temporary basis. She is Laura-Jayne Norman's sister and holds an NVQ2 in childcare.

Leavers

We say goodbye to both Jo Hutchcraft and Kimberley Jones in March, who leave the childcare sector altogether. Jo has taken a credit control position for a call centre operation, whilst Kimberley has decided to do temporary office work. They will be missed by all. Best of luck in your new careers!

Sarah Boon takes maternity leave in March. Best of luck with the birth!

Training

Congratulations to Val Oxley who gained an NVQ3 in Childcare and Education last October.

Katie Wade, Jenny Edwards and Stephanie Ball are all progressing well with the NVQ3 Childcare and Education programme, whilst Laura-Jayne Norman is scheduled to complete hers in the next few months. Keep up the good work!

Laura-Jayne Norman will also be attending a Level 2 Child Protection course in March. She currently holds a Level 1 certificate.

The nursery is currently in the process of arranging Paediatric First Aid refresher courses for a number of staff. The investment will be significant in the region of £700.

Staff Matters (continued)

As mentioned earlier, it is our intention for some of the staff to attend (in the near future) formal FA football coaches training courses to aid with delivering the Silks Strikers™ programme.

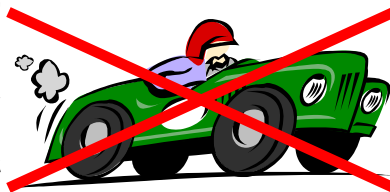
Treats for Staff

For last quarters staff treat, Silks Farm Nursery School paid for an extravagant Christmas Party at Burgess Hall in St. Ives. The staff thoroughly enjoyed the 3-course meal, cabaret and disco, with a few members feeling worse for wear the next day.

Final Notes

'Begging Corner'

The main request this time is from Little Nursery. Katie is asking for wool and any fabric (maybe from old clothes). Janice would like a large waterproof sheet about 7 foot square, could be a piece of plastic. An old ground sheet from a tent would be ideal.



Speeding on a newly laid gravel drive is dangerous. Stopping distances are longer and stones can be thrown up onto cars, children and parents. Please slow down for everyone's safety. Thank you.

Polite Note

We have recently noticed that some parents/carers are dropping off their children outside session times. Just to remind you session times are:

Requests & Reminders

Many parents have commented that too many people are speeding in their cars on the nursery's drive and have asked us to advise parents to slow down.

- All day: 7am to 7pm
- Morning session: 7am to 1pm
- Afternoon sessions: 2pm to 7pm

Just look at some of the things your children have been doing at Silks Farm!

Counting money with Claire



Story time with Tanya



Chinese lanterns by Early Years Rooms



Clouds by Baby & Toddler Rooms

Children enjoying a Silks Strikers Session!



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