

News Bulletin - Spring 2015

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Where every child has
the opportunity to flourish



Welcome to the first edition of Windmills Opportunity Playgroup termly news bulletin. The bulletin will cover news about what went on in the previous term and cover fundraising, donations, activities in the playgroup, and other detail. As a charity we have to raise funds each year to enable the playgroup to operate and the idea of the news bulletin is to keep existing and potential donors informed about the playgroup. Also it is useful to let prospective new parents/carers know more about how the playgroup operates to provide the best outcome for their children.

Our Supporters

The summer holiday started with some volunteers from Flowserve, a local business, carrying out some much need maintenance jobs. The main job they did was to redecorate our Maple Room, putting up some large notice boards and replacing the rather old flooring. In addition to providing all of the materials, they installed a thermostatic



From left to right, Graham, Andy, Ruth and Elaine from Flowserve receiving a thank you card for decorating the Maple Room.

valve on the basin in the toilet used by the children and created an office area in the area off the Maple Room.

In addition to their voluntary work Flowserve has chosen us as one of their local charities to support and have donated a further £500 during this period.

Childhelp Hassocks continues to support us by donating £200 and has been our main regular funder. The organisation was established in October 1997 and was set up to relieve the hardship suffered by children (under the age of 18), advancement of education, and other charitable purposes for the benefit of children in the local community and worldwide. They have a charity shop located in Hassocks.

Three Oaks Trust based in Horsham donated £5000 to the playgroup for the fourth consecutive year. The trust was set up in June 1987 and had previous links to the playgroup in the early days. Their generosity over the 4 years has been very



From left to right. Teresa (a parent Trustee), Gary (Trustee), Charlie, Debbie and Tina from the Coop Maple Drive Burgess Hill

welcome, as it gets harder to get monies for running costs.

The Co-op next to the playgroup was refurbished at the start of the summer. When they reopened they introduced a new policy of supporting a local playgroup over a period of three months. We were fortunate to be chosen as the first playgroup to support and they raised £ £914.81 for us. They did this with homemade cakes, dressing up, raffling a day pass for Butlins and other activities. The monies were used for purchasing an iPad, a new CD player and other resources for the children. The iPad has proved a very useful tool for the children, especially as we now have internet access at the playgroup.



Noticeboard donated by PSP Homes

The noticeboard outside the front of the hall was replaced by a new one from PSP Homes. This was much needed and enabled us to post information about the playgroup.

We received a donation from the Burgess Hill Lions

for £1250. They have supported us in the past and this included monies towards our very successful Sensory Room. It is setup as a calming environment and the children call it the 'Magic Room'.

Some of the other monies came from a grant by Burgess Hill Town Council for £1000 towards rent and just under £100 raised at the Woodlands Mead Christmas fair.



Christmas Card Designs by Hannah

For the second year running we produced Christmas cards. The design this year was created by Hannah, one of our practitioners and proved a great success. This year, thanks to Barclays Bank, we made a profit of £529. This was mainly achieved by them selling them through 3 local branches and providing us with match funding of £381.50.

Our Resident Artist

We always provide a range of different creative activities for the children including printing, painting, sticking, modelling and collage. However, without a doubt the children's favourite creative activity involves helping our practitioner Hannah create the amazing wall displays that we have in our Maple Room. The displays are bright, stimulating and a great talking point for the children who are very proud of their contributions to the displays.

Hannah has been at Windmills since September 2010 during which time she has completed her NVQ3 and progressed to undertaking her BA (Hons) in Early Years Practice at the University of Brighton.



Hannah with some of her 'Followers'



Some of the display panels in the Maple Room

As well as being our resident artist Hannah has the enviable ability of being able to successfully engage the children in imaginative play. The children love these games, which frequently involve searching for treasure with pirates or coming across aliens on far flung planets!

Children's Activities

As a setting we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, which suggests using the children's interest as a starting point for children's learning. This is something we have taken on board and incorporated into our planning, as it makes perfect sense to us that children who interested and engaged in a subject are motivated to learn more! The children's individual interests are wide ranging from dinosaurs, to spiders, and fire engines. However without a doubt a reoccurring favourite is Superhero's which this term we were able to combine with supporting Children in Need who used Superhero's as their theme for this year.

We started our Superhero week by whizzing up some Superhero smoothies, which encouraged the children to identify and taste a range of fruit. Continuing with the healthy eating the children



Superhero Week - Clear for take-off!



Visit from Father Christmas

chose favourite fillings to make Superhero sandwiches to help them grow Superhero muscles. We encouraged pre reading skills by getting the children to identify Superhero logos and we read Superhero stories and talked about the superhero strengths that we would most like ourselves. We ended the week with a dressing up and face painting day and of course we had to have a go at flying too!

Towards the end of the term we invited parents and families to come in and spend an hour with their child making a few simple Christmas crafts. The children love doing these activities with parents and at such a busy time of year it can be very hard to find time to do these things at home. The children took home, homemade cards, tree decorations and cakes.

The term ended with our annual Christmas Singing event where the children sing favourite songs as well as Christmas favourites to family and friends.

We were very proud of our little ones especially those who stood up in front of a packed hall to use a microphone and sing a solo, how brave! As the singing finished we heard the sound of a bell in the distance announcing the arrival of Father Christmas, the children were thrilled to all receive a present from the man in red and it was lovely to end a busy term with lots of very happy little children!

We hope you have enjoyed our first issue of our termly news bulletin and would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody that has supported us.

From all of Windmills

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