



## September 2021 NEWSLETTER

We hope that you all had a lovely summer holiday and are looking forward to the new term. Thank you so much for the lovely gifts that we were treated to at the end of last term!

**A warm welcome to** our new children and their families that are joining us this term.

### Preparing for Autumn weather

Please remember that your child will need a pair of wellingtons and a warm waterproof coat in nursery every day.

Your child will also need a set of spare clothes, to be kept in their red bag on their peg, in case of accidents or messy play.

Please also ensure that your child comes to nursery in suitable footwear. They will be spending time indoors and out each day, so they need comfortable and ideally closed toe shoes to protect their feet. As always, please remember to name EVERYTHING clearly. Thank you.



### Lunchbox Reminders

- Please do not include any foods containing nuts in your child's lunch, this includes cereal bars, homemade cakes, etc. If you are unsure, please check ingredients lists of products.
- To avoid the possibility of your child choking on foods such as grapes, olives, cherry tomatoes etc. please ensure that these are cut in half.
- All yoghurts are to be in pots; no tubes or pouches please.
- Please clearly name the outside of your child's lunchbox including their surname.



### Settling in sessions

Our settling in sessions for our new starters will predominantly take place in our outside areas this term. Please ring the doorbell and we will take you to one of our nursery gardens. Your child will be able to play freely with the other children/resources in the garden and they will also have access to the main hall.

**Westmill Village Hall, Westmill, Nr. Buntingford, Herts, SG9 9LG**  
**Tel 01763 273005, Email: [westmillnursery@btinternet.com](mailto:westmillnursery@btinternet.com)**  
**[www.westmillnursery.co.uk](http://www.westmillnursery.co.uk)**

Please bring with you the completed paperwork (from the bookbag) so that we can go through it with you on the 1<sup>st</sup> session. You will have the opportunity to purchase uniform during these sessions also.

We must ask that you arrive promptly for the sessions and not any earlier/later as we have more than one session taking place each day and have arranged them ensuring each child can spend time with their keyworker and that we can meet child ratios within the settling. If you do not arrive at the correct time/day we are unlikely to be able to reschedule the session for you until a much later date which will delay children starting.

### **Existing Injury**

Just a reminder that should your child have an injury prior to arriving at nursery please do let a member of staff know in the morning. This may be a fall at the weekend, a scratch from the cat, a bump on the way to nursery etc. You will need to complete a short form detailing the injury so that we are able to provide the best and any follow up care your child needs.

### **Medication**

If you require us to administer prescribed medicine during the session, please ask for a medicine form at drop off – we are unable to administer medication without a form being completed.



### **Art Projects for schools Christmas Cards**

It is a bit early to mention Christmas, sorry, but just to make you aware we are again participating in art projects for schools Christmas cards. More information will be sent home during October with details on how cards and gift tags can be ordered. The nursery receives a small amount of fund-raising commission for all purchases made which we use to buy resources for the children at nursery.

### **Comments and Suggestions**

We always welcome any comments and suggestions you have with regards to the nursery. We are happy to receive these in person, via the comments and suggestions box kept in the porch or please email us.

### **Have your details changed?**

It is essential that we have up to date contact details for parents/carers and emergency contacts. If any of your details have changed recently, please let us know so we can update your child's record. Thank you.

### **Autumn Funding Forms (3-4 years olds only)**

The forms for the free nursery hours were sent home at the end of the summer term. If you haven't yet returned the form, please can you ensure it is back to us by Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September so we can apply for the free nursery hours for your child. If you have misplaced your form, please let us know asap so we can send a new one home. If your child was absent at the end of last the term, we will send their form home this/next week.

## Planning on increasing or decreasing sessions?

- **Notification of Leaving**

If your child is leaving us at the end of the Autumn Term (Christmas) we require at least half a terms notice in writing. If this is not received then 4 weeks fees are due in lieu of notice, based on your child's current attendance. This is still applicable for children in receipt of the Nursery Funded Hours.

Also, if your child is leaving us at the end of **July 2022** to join another nursery, please can you also let us know asap as we have lots of enquiries for spaces from September 2022 and so we want to try and plan ahead and not get over subscribed! (We do not need to be advised of children going to reception). Thank you. Please contact Sandra or Sarah to let them know.

- **Waiting list & Extended sessions**

Don't forget that the term after your child turns three, they will be eligible for 15 free funded hours. If you wish to increase your child's hours when they are eligible and take advantage of the hours available to them, please let Sarah or Sandra know in advance so we can add the information to the waiting list and check availability – we do not automatically offer more hours as we have a waiting list so, please ensure you let us know.

Once your child is receiving the 3 year old funding **and they are in their nursery year at Westmill (leaving for Reception at the end of the current academic year)**, they are able to stay for our extended sessions (1.20pm to 2.20pm Monday to Thursday). If you would like your child to join our extended sessions, please let Sarah or Sandra know so we can check availability in the extended sessions – again we do not automatically offer extended sessions so please let us know if this is something you would like for your child in their final nursery year with us.

## Harvest Hamper Donations



Harvest is a wonderful time of year for the children to gain a sense of appreciation of the food they eat and learning that not all food comes from supermarkets. In previous years the children have delivered several food hampers to elderly residents in Westmill which have been very much appreciated. We would like to make up some hampers this

year with your support.

Please send in any items of food that do not need refrigeration **from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September**. These could include tins, packets and even fresh fruit & vegetables. Please pop these in the basket in the porch. The children will make up the hampers and deliver them on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September. Thank you for your support.

## Fee and uniform payments

A reminder that we now **only accept BAC** payments for fees, uniform and other miscellaneous payments. We are no longer taking cash or cheque payments. Apologies for any inconvenience this may cause. Fees for this half term are due by Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September please.

### Contacting the nursery

We welcome contact via telephone or email. Please be aware that we may not always answer your phone call during the session as there may not be a spare member of staff free at that point to take the call, but please leave a message on the answer machine and we will get back to you at the earliest opportunity. Emails aren't always checked during nursery hours by Sandra or Sarah as we keep our phones locked away during the session for safeguarding purposes. Only urgent emails will be picked up during the evenings, weekend and nursery half term and summer holidays.



### Nursery hours funding information

We get lots of questions about the free nursery hours funding so we have put together some information which we hope will answer some of your queries.

#### 15 hours funding:

The 15 free hours funding is available to all 3- and 4-year-olds the term **after** your child turns 3. The application is made by nursery after parents have completing a declaration form, which we will provide during the 1st couple of weeks of the term during which your child will start to receive the free hours. So, for Summer term applications we will send home forms in April, for Autumn term applications we will send home forms in September and for Spring term applications we will send home forms in January. These forms need to be fully completed and returned to us promptly so we can meet the online application window, which is just one week a couple of weeks into the term. The first time your child receives the funding you will need to return your application along with a copy of your child's birth certificate so we can declare we have checked and verified your child's age.

To take advantage of the free hours you may wish to increase your child's sessions, so they are doing 3 mornings and extended sessions equalling 15 hours or 4 morning sessions equalling 16 hours (and paying for the one additional hour a week). If you wish to increase your child's sessions/hours you will need to let us know in advance so we can have this information on our waiting list. We recommend planning ahead and letting us know at least a term in advance as available sessions are offered on a first come first served basis. ***Because of the waiting list system we do not offer extra sessions automatically, you need to let us know you would like to increase sessions.*** If your child attends another setting or has a child minder you may wish to split the 15 hours between us and the other setting/child minder, but you can't claim any more than 15 hours a week between the 2 providers.

#### 30 hours funding:

30 free hours can only be claimed if your family meets certain criteria, if you do not meet these criteria, you will still be able to claim 15 free hours:

- all parents in the house work at least 16 hours a week and earn at least £107 per week
- you don't earn over £100,000 per parent in your household
- 1 parent is employed and 1 parent is disabled or incapacitated, based on receipt of specific benefits
- 1 parent is employed and 1 parent has substantial caring responsibilities, based on specific benefits received for caring

- both parents are employed but 1 or both parents are temporarily away from the workplace on parental, maternity, paternity, or adoption leave
- if both parents are employed but 1 or both parents are temporarily away from the workplace on statutory sick pay.
- Self-employed parents and parents on zero-hours contracts will be eligible if they meet the average earnings criteria.

Westmill nursery isn't open for 30 hours a week and at the moment we have no plans to increase the nursery open hours however we will be able to offer up to 24 free hours to children who are eligible, subject to availability of sessions/hours. As with the 15 free hours, the hours can be split between 2 providers. As with any increase in hours at our nursery you will need to let us know if you want more sessions so we can add the information to our waiting list.

### **2 year old funding:**

Some 2 year olds can get 570 hours per year (15 free hours a week for 38 weeks). If you receive benefits, you may be eligible. Please use the eligibility checker on the Herts website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/childcare-and-advice-for-parents/free-early-education-and-childcare/childcare-and-free-early-education.aspx> or speak to your local children's centre for more information.

### **Dates for your diaries**

Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September	Inset day - <b>nursery closed</b>
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September	Start of the Autumn term
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> September - Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September	Please bring in Harvest Donations this week
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> October	Half Term
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Inset day - <b>nursery closed</b>
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> December	End of Autumn Term. <b>Session ends at 12.20pm. No Lunch needed.</b>
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	Inset day - <b>nursery closed</b>
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> January	Start of the Spring term
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> February to Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> February	Half Term
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> April	End of Spring Term. <b>Session ends at 12.20pm. No Lunch needed.</b>
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> – Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter holidays
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	Start of the Summer term
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> May – Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	Half term
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> June	Inset day - <b>nursery closed</b>
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> July	End of the Summer Term. <b>Session ends at 12.20pm. No Lunch needed.</b>

All the team at Westmill Nursery