



# COA Newsletter

Chelsea Open Air Nursery School and Children's Centre  
51 Glebe Place, London. SW3 5JE  
Tel: 020 7352 8374 Fax: 020 7376 8350  
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## A MESSAGE FROM KATHRYN

Thank-you for all the kind and supportive messages I have received from families and colleagues, which are encouraging me to get back on my feet as soon as possible.

The surgeon and hospital did a grand job, but because my leg has got used to working without a knee cap for over 30 years the soft tissue will take a bit longer to return to something like normal. I am feeling less bruised and battered as each day goes by, but my weekly sessions with the physiotherapist as I have nicknamed him leave me rather drained!!!

Still I am getting better on my crutches and have been out twice now on brief journeys helped by family and friends and I am beginning to feel more able to use my grey cells effectively again. It is quite scary what medication does to you!

Each day is a new adventure and a small step or two towards my return.



## PARENTS EVENING

This term our parents evening will be held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> Dec from 5-6pm. Our theme is 'Healthy Eating', and Claire and Sharon will be talking about the ways in which we support both children and families here at COA to increase their understanding of healthy eating and all that it entails. Please let us know if you will be able to join us by signing up on the sheet in the children's entrance hall. Please also let us know if require a crèche place for your child.

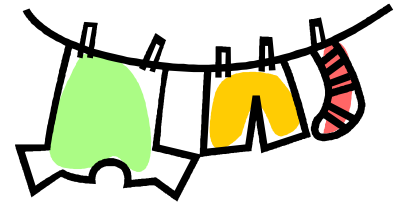


## BOX TOPS FOR BOOKS

Please keep collecting the box tops tokens, and put them in the box in the children's entrance to help us to get free books for our library.

## SPARE CLOTHES

Please remember to return any spare clothes that your child has borrowed from nursery, as our supplies are running low.



We would also be grateful of any donations of children's underwear, especially girls' knickers to replenish our stock!



## FAMILY LEARNING

Our next workshop for parents and children to learn together 'Fun with Dough' is on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November. Workshops will run at 9:15am and be repeated at 1:15pm. Please sign up on the list in the entrance hall.



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## WHAT IS AN EXCELLENT SCHOOL?

Having plenty of time to reflect and think at present I have been thinking carefully how COA can do more than be outstanding. The rules change and governments come and go, the curriculum is being refined and the measures used by Ofsted have changed once more; yet COA which has something central to its core ethos about excellence in the longer term, which has stood the test of time.

I was asked recently about what makes an excellent children's centre and as usual I struggled to distinguish between the children's centre and the nursery school as one grew from the other and they are closely interlinked in ethos, policy and practice. However, I believe quality is primarily based in the staff and the leadership of the school/centre. Impeccable organisation, clear communication and a strong ethos valuing diversity and inclusion whilst demonstrating respect and sensitivity to children are also of central importance. Equally children's

progress is also of critical importance, but at this young age progress has to be considered carefully alongside development. Thus the maximum use of learning/playing time, effective routines and making the most of every second for every child are cornerstones. Staff have high expectations for the children both in terms of their learning and behaviour and these are clearly communicated to them. Learning must be meaningful and linked directly to children's interests and needs and must therefore be personalised. Children develop from solo to collaborative learners, and via the skills of sustained shared thinking, enabled by highly competent staff, grow as superior thinkers.

Children learn to be independent first in their hygiene and self-help skills and gradually in their learning. Hence, we do not spend time "telling children off" but rather "catching them being good."

Likewise although their profiles are highly effective visual records of learning which each child can access we work carefully to record the significant achievements each child makes which show

the progress and steps forward they make in learning and development, whatever their starting point.

Unsurprisingly, it is relationships between staff and children and staff and families which are also a major contributing factor in growing children's achievement and creating an exceptional school and children's centre.

So whether it is an everyday type activity in the nursery, a stay and play session or parent one-to-one meeting in the children's centre it is the following I believe that makes COA exceptional:

- Leadership with a focus on creative curiosity, perseverance and passion for early years
- High calibre, well trained staff
- Quality organisation and communication
- The central principle that we put the child first in all we do.
- A focus on learning based upon children's interests
- A core focus which values diversity, inclusion and access by all.
- A strong awareness that we only "borrow" your child and hence we need to support, encourage and help parents and carers in



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raising their child in the most effective way for them.

- A belief that every child (whatever their background) deserves the best childhood we can provide in partnership with their family.

So what is your view about COA?

Do email Kathryn with your ideas and comments on what else we can do to improve things for your child and you [kathryn.solly@coans.rbkc.sch.uk](mailto:kathryn.solly@coans.rbkc.sch.uk)



## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our Christmas party for the children at COA will be on the afternoon of Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December, from 1-3pm. There will be no morning nursery or extended day services on the day, in order to enable the staff to prepare for the party. Therefore all children are invited to attend from 1-3pm. Parents will be invited to contribute food, crackers, paper plates etc. More details to follow shortly.

## family futures

### EMPLOYMENT, BENEFITS AND HOUSING ADVICE

This is a free confidential advice service for mums, dads and carers that runs every other Tuesday at COA and on other days in Children's Centres across the south of the borough. The service, run by Simon Lewis, is there to help with:

- Planning a route back to work
- CV preparation
- Interview techniques
- Training and voluntary work
- Accessing work and health-related benefits
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit
- Childcare options and help towards costs

Parents and carers can book one-to-one appointments in the office.

Simon will be here on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December. Appointments are available between 9:30am and 4:30pm. For more information, please ask Claire.



### UP AND ACTIVE

These informative and fun sessions for parents and children will be led by Megan a children's physiotherapist, on Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> and Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> Dec, from 1:30-2:30pm.

The first session is for parents/carers only to talk about the importance of play, how children learn new skills and your role in getting your child physically ready for school.

The second session is for both you and your child to play the games and learn together.

Speak to Simon or Lynsey in the office to book a place.

### DON'T FORGET...

- To return your evaluation of your parent/keyworker meeting.
- To return your permission slip for the tooth-brushing programme at COA this week!



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## CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

We will be holding our Christmas lights gathering at COA on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> Dec from 5-6pm. This is an opportunity for children, parents, extended family and friends to gather together and sing songs and celebrate this festive time of year. We will be using this opportunity to help raise money for ShelterBox, the Disaster Relief Charity who provide shelter, warmth and dignity to those who have been affected by disasters worldwide.

A representative from the charity will be joining us during the afternoon nursery session, as well as for the Christmas Lights gathering. You can help by providing cakes and biscuits for us to sell and bringing along any spare change to donate.

Thank-you



## GIVE A BEAR A HOME

"Tis the season to be jolly..." and we have the perfect Christmas present idea for you! Building on the success of the cotton shopping bags, our latest fundraiser is a soft furry teddy bear, complete with his very own COA jumper. The bears will make a great memento for COA families both past and present, so please help us spread the word and raise money for school fund. Bears cost £8 each or 2 for £15, and will be on sale at the in the office from next week.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Tues Nov 29<sup>th</sup>:

Fun with Dough! - Family Learning Workshops  
9:15am and 1:15pm

### Thurs Dec 1<sup>st</sup>:

Up and Active Session 1  
(Parents only)  
1:30-2:30pm

Parents Evening -  
Healthy Eating  
5-6pm

### Tues Dec 6<sup>th</sup>:

Family Futures -  
Appointments between  
9:30am and 4:30pm

Enjoy and Achieve course -  
First Aid for Babies and  
Infants (with crèche)

### Thurs Dec 8<sup>th</sup>:

Up and Active Session 2  
(Parents and children)  
1:30-2:30pm

Christmas Lights  
5-6pm

### Weds Dec 14<sup>th</sup>:

Children's Christmas Party  
1-3pm

### Fri Dec 16<sup>th</sup>:

Last day of term  
All part timers attend  
9-11:30a.m.  
All full timers attend  
9-1p.m. No COA+ p.m.

### Mon 19<sup>th</sup>-Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup>:

Christmas Holiday Club