

# Kintore Way Children's Centre

## Newsletter September 2008

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to all our families who are returning after the summer break and a special welcome to all those parents and children who are coming to Kintore Way for the first time. The children who have transferred from Seashore room to River or Rainforest have made themselves at home and it's good to see our first babies now in the nursery school. There is always a great deal going on at Kintore Way so please look on notice boards and doors for new information and new opportunities. Our cook, Hermine, would also like to receive constructive feedback from parents whose children are now staying at school for lunch. Please look at the weekly menu in the entrance near reception and let us know what you think.

Sharon

### **Outdoors**

If you have not already had a chance to explore the new garden works please try to take a few moments to look around. We have a new 'beach' area, planting beds, storytelling stage, logs, rocks and muddy play. The children are using their imagination and creativity to enhance their play and are really enjoying the changes.

The new wall at the far end of the garden is now complete and we hope it will provide better security both for our children and for our neighbours whose homes we border. You may also have noticed that we are having part of the old wall rebuilt in the secret garden. This is again to improve safety and security for all concerned without removing our links with the past. We have a responsibility to maintain our heritage and keep it safe for our children's children.

Please try to ensure that your child can manage the clothes and shoes they are wearing by themselves. When going to the toilet or changing into waterproofs to play outside when wet it is less stressful for the children if there are no fiddly fastenings to negotiate before they can get on with what they want to do.

## **Birthdays**

Most of our children will celebrate at least one birthday whilst they are at Kintore Way and parents often ask if they can bring treats in to celebrate. We want the day to be special for your child and safely shared with friends. We do have children with allergies as well as those with dietary constraints for family, religious and medical reasons. In order to respect these needs it is the policy that in Rainforest and River rooms parents are invited to bring the more luxurious fruits such as pineapple, mango, kiwi etc. to share with your child's key group. Parents of children in Orchard, Desert and Seashore rooms please talk to your Keyworker about suitable ways to celebrate!

## **Attendance**

This seems a good time to remind everyone that your child will only get the most from a nursery place if they attend regularly. It is not possible to cover the whole curriculum every day so if a child's attendance is poor there may well be learning areas in which they do not achieve the level of development that they could have done. They will also find it difficult to build good relationships with other children and with staff. It is part of the attendance policy of the centre that if a child's attendance falls below 90% without an acceptable reason the place (full or part time) may be at risk.

It is also important that your child is brought and collected at the agreed time. Children can become very distressed if all their friends have been collected and they have not or if they cannot access their preferred activity because they have arrived late.

## **Thanks**

We have received many positive comments from parents and carers of new children starting at Kintore Way. You have been impressed by the facilities and resources available and by the care and attention of classroom staff. We would like to say a big thank-you for these comments as it really does help us to know when we are getting things right.

### **Time to spare?**

The staff in Seashore room will be taking groups of children to the local library on Friday mornings and need volunteers to accompany them. You do not have to have a child in Seashore room to volunteer, just be able to spare some time and be happy to take a little walk in the company of 2-3 year olds. If you might be able to help, please speak to Sandra or any other member of the Seashore staff team.

### **Supporting Marie Curie Cancer Care**

The children in Seashore room will be taking part in a daffodil growing activity as part of a fund raised for Marie Curie Cancer Care. They will plant their bulbs, decorate the pots and enter the pot wrapper into a competition as well as taking home donation envelopes for sponsor's contributions. We hope that you will offer your support to such a worth while cause.

### **Resource Detectives**

The staff in River and Rainforest rooms will be happy to receive any of the following items to support the curriculum:

- Clean yoghurt pots
- Small cardboard cartons
- Conkers, pine cones etc
- Different coloured Autumn leaves

The staff in Orchard and Desert rooms are developing a program of heuristic play sessions for the babies where they are encouraged to explore collections of objects, including natural materials, in a relaxed and unhurried way so that they can use all of their senses to improve their understanding and experience of the world around them. The staff would be happy to receive any of the following items providing they are in a clean and safe condition:

Rollers

Chains

Corks

Coffee and Baby Milk Tins (empty)

Magnets

Balls (various shapes)	Pine Cones	Fabric
Ribbon	Keys	Spoons
Stones	Bath plugs	Lids
Small baskets	Sponges	Kitchen Roll tubes
Bangles	Shower hoses	Pegs

## **Eid**

Eid Mubarak to all our Muslim families. The fasting period of Ramadan ends early next week and is marked by the festival of Eid. On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October the children are invited to wear their Eid clothes to school so that they can show their friends how the festival is celebrated at home (please bring a change of clothes for your child so that they will be free to paint or play outside afterwards). If parents and carers would like to share in the class celebrations please talk to staff.

## **International Day**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> October Kintore Way will be holding an international day to celebrate all nationalities and backgrounds. There will be Mandinka Drummers playing for two sessions during the day and parents/carers are invited to bring and share snacks from their home culture (and traditional clothing if willing) between 4.00 and 7.00pm. Come and relax, have a chat and maybe try something new!

## **Services for Parents and Carers**

My name is Elaine Bailey. I work for Sure Start Children's Centres as your Parent Development Coordinator. I am here to make contact with parents-to-be, and parents/carers with children under 5. I provide a friendly confidential listening ear for you when needed and point you in the right direction for advice/support. If you would like to find out

about activities for your child, support with finding childcare, healthy eating advice, debt or money worries, going back to work, stress, anxiety or depression, parenting issues or you would just like to talk. Then Please come along and have a chat with me at one of the PARENT/CARER ADVICE SESSIONS at Kintore Way on Tuesday mornings 9am-11:30am or Friday afternoons 1pm-4pm. You can also email me at [elaine.bailey@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:elaine.bailey@southwark.gov.uk). Or call me on 0207 525 0045. IT'S GOOD TO TALK.

Elaine Bailey

## **MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT TAX CREDITS ARE ONLY FOR PARENTS. THAT'S NOT TRUE, PLEASE READ ON:-**

By Debbie Morey, Advice Worker at Blackfriars Advice Centre

**Child Tax Credit IS** for individuals who are at least 16 years old and who are parents **and carers** of children. The following criteria apply:-

It is an income-based credit for low and middle income families who are in or out of work and who have responsibility for child(ren) under 16, or under 20 if in full-time non-advanced education or been accepted to undertake approved training.

**Working Tax Credit** is an income-based credit for individuals who are working and who are at least 16 years old. The following criteria apply:-

You are entitled to claim if you or your partner are working 16 hours or more per week and are responsible for child(ren) OR have a disability that puts you at a disadvantage in getting a job OR you qualify for a 50-plus element. Also, You are entitled to claim if you are working 30 hours per week and you are 25 or over.

## **HOW TO CLAIM**

You claim **both** child tax credit and working tax credit **on the same claim form**, but, more usual now, is that the Tax Credit Office likes you to make your claim over the telephone (see below for this number) and they will send you the form to check, sign and return to them before they

will assess you for an award. Note that a claim can be backdated for 3 months if you fulfil the criteria and if you request this on the form.

### **CHILDCARE COSTS CAN BE PAID OUT OF WORKING TAX CREDIT (CALLED CHILDCARE ELEMENT OF WORKING TAX CREDIT)**

Only when you as individuals are parents or carers of children and receiving working tax credit (**not** child tax credit), are you entitled to have 80% of your actual childcare costs paid for you. Up to £175 per week for one child, or £300 per week for 2 or more children. The rules say that the childcare must be 'relevant'. Relevant childcare means registered childminders, childcare schemes and/or nurseries approved by the authorities.

Only the following are entitled to Working Tax Credit Childcare Element:-

- a lone parent in full-time paid work, OR
- you and your partner (living together) and you are both in full-time paid work, or one of you is in full-time paid work and the other is incapacitated, or one of you is in full-time paid work and the other is in hospital or in prison.

Please note that full-time paid work is 16 hours or more a week for childcare element purposes.

Therefore, note that it is assumed that if a lone parent is not in full-time work (16 hours per week) or one of a couple living together is not in full-time paid work (16 hours per week), not incapacitated, not in hospital or in prison, then they will be the carer of the children and therefore no childcare costs will be paid to them out of the childcare element of working tax credit.

### **PAYMENTS OF CHILDCARE COSTS**

The general rule is that if it is a single claim or a joint couple claim the payment of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit is paid direct to the claimant who it has been decided (if in the case of a couple) is the main carer of the children. As far as I know, under the tax credits rules,

childcare costs can only be paid to claimants and not to direct the childcare providers.

These are the basic rules. If you want to discuss any aspect of your tax credits claim, come to see Debbie at the drop-in advice sessions at Kintore Way Children's Centre on Mondays 10 a.m – 12 p.m. and on Thursdays 2-4 p.m. at the Early Learning & Parents' Centre (or Under Five's) at Rotherhithe Primary School, Rotherhithe New Road (on number 1 bus route).

**Reminder: You can order a claim form, make a claim, ask questions about your entitlement or claim from the Tax Credit Office helpline:- 0845 300 3900 from 8 a.m to 8 p.m.**

Arts and Crafts sessions on Wednesday Afternoons until Half Term - please see lobby notices for details.

ESOL (English speaking) Classes on Tuesdays at 1.00pm (free, places still available, come along to the next session to register).

Parent and Toddler groups, on Monday afternoons with Baby Music and on Thursday mornings and afternoons.

We will be hosting a coffee morning for parents and carers on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October between 9.30 and 11.00am in Mountain Room - please come and join us if you can.

### **Calling all dads**

Our next 'Father's Day' Saturday breakfast will be on 11<sup>th</sup> October from 9.00 - 11.00am. There will be a wide variety of play activities available and, of course, food! In keeping with other events taking place over the next few weeks this will have a multicultural theme.

The last session in June was a great success and we have more planned for later in the year (including a pancake party in February!) so come and share some quality time with your under fives and tuck in.

### **Half Term**

There will be a number of holiday play scheme places available for working parents of children in River and Rainforest rooms during half term (October 27<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>). If you might be interested in applying for a place please make enquiries at reception, where they will have details of hours, costs etc.

**Would you consider being a governor?**

We will shortly be recruiting for a parent governor to join the Governing Body of Kintore Way. We will send out a separate letter soon with all the necessary information so please look out for it.