



Autumn Term 1 2024 Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

We hope you have all had a lovely summer break. We would like to welcome back our children who were with us last year, as well as our new families who have joined us at Hollytree. Apologies for a rather lengthy newsletter but there is a lot to cover so please read carefully!

Term Dates

Our term dates for this academic year are:

Autumn Term - Monday 2nd September – Friday 20th December

(Please note Monday 2nd September will just be for settling in sessions, preschool returns normally on Tuesday 3rd September)

Half term - Monday 28th October – Friday 1st November

Spring Term - Monday 6th January – Friday 4th April

Half Term - Monday 17th February – Friday 21st February

Summer term - Tuesday 22nd April – Tuesday 22nd July

Half term - Monday 26th May – Friday 30th May

Day closures:

Friday 4th October

Monday 7th October

Friday 29th November

Monday 27th January

Monday 21st July

Tuesday 22nd July

We may also have to close if the hall is used as a polling station at any point during the year.

Staffing

We are very pleased to welcome two new members of staff to the Hollytree team this term! Kerry and Lucy both have experience working in early years settings and are qualified to Level 3. Kerry will be with the Squirrels group and Lucy with the Owls.

Funding and help with childcare costs

Hollytree accepts funding for eligible 2-year-olds, the government funding for 3- and 4-year-olds and the 30-hour funding for those families that are eligible. If you need to check your eligibility for 2-year-old funding or 30-hour funding for 3- or 4-year-olds you can visit <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> From this link you can also find information about tax free childcare. Again, Hollytree is registered to accept this and it is a way for working families to get help with childcare costs if they are paying fees. If you need any more information, please let us know.

Website

Our website has been updated and has lots of information about the pre-school including all of our updated Policies and Procedures. We would advise all new parents, as well as our returning families,

to have a look at our policies, if you would like to borrow paper copies do let us know. You can also see our theme for the half term, term dates, an outline of how our sessions run as well as a gallery of photos from last term. Visit www.hollytreepreschool.org.uk. We also have a Facebook page which we invite all parents to follow as updates and information are shared here.

Themes

Our focus for this half term will be **'Fairy Tales'**. We will be sharing the stories:

- Goldilocks and the Three Bears
- The Three Little Pigs
- Jack and the Beanstalk
- The Little Red Hen

We will be:

- Reading, sharing and retelling the stories using toys, puppets and pictures;
- Looking at size and comparing big and small;
- Building homes for the Three Little Pigs using different materials and construction resources;
- Planting beans and thinking about what they will need to grow;

Contact Details

Please make sure all of your contact details, including home and mobile telephone numbers as well as email addresses are kept up to date. We tend to send newsletters and other information by email but if you would rather have a paper copy just let us know.

Snack

If your child is with us for the morning or all-day session, we ask that you send in a healthy snack with them that they can eat independently. Snack should be in a named bag or small container that can be placed in the snack tray at the start of the session. Examples of what to send at snack time are: a piece of fruit or vegetable, rice cakes, breadsticks, cheese, crackers or yoghurt. All children should also bring a named bottle ideally with water in but we are happy for them to have squash if they will not drink water.

*Please note: we are a **NUT FREE** setting and all grapes and cherry tomatoes **MUST** be cut up at home.*

Named clothing

Please ensure all jumpers, cardigans, coats, hats and anything else your child may take off are clearly named! Please also ensure they are dressed for the weather as we do try to use the outside area at all times. This includes the field and woods so please also ensure they are wearing appropriate footwear. A change of clothes can be brought in their book bag. If your child is still in nappies please send in a bag with nappies, wipes and nappy bags that can be kept at preschool. As we don't have a lot of space for storage please try to avoid sending large backpacks into preschool.

Uniform

We have optional uniform which you can purchase extras of if needed. Due to increased costs, we have had to put our prices up slightly. Hollytree jumpers can be bought for £13 and T-shirts for £7, we also have book bags which cost £7.

Toys

Please try not to send any toys into preschool from home! They can cause problems when other children want to play with them and can also easily get lost or broken. We promise we have lots to keep the children occupied when they are at preschool!

We do also try to make preschool a 'dummy free zone' so please encourage your child to leave their dummy at home.

Sun Cream

If it is sunny, we advise you to apply sun cream before they come in. Sun cream that lasts for the whole day is best, or if your child is able to apply it themselves, a named roll-on sun cream can be brought in in their book bag.

Lunch boxes

We do try to encourage healthy lunches so please do not send in sweets or chocolate bars. Please also ensure your child's lunch is a manageable amount for them to eat and that they can eat it independently. They also need to bring any cutlery that they need. A 'Healthy Lunch' leaflet is attached with this newsletter.

Illness

Can we remind you that it is our policy that if children or staff have had a sickness bug, they must not return to pre-school for 48 hours after the symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea have stopped.

We also ask that if your child has a temperature or needs paracetamol, please be considerate to the other children and staff members and keep them home. Illness spreads incredibly quickly with this age group so please think carefully about whether your child is well enough for preschool.

Absence

Can we remind all parents that you MUST email, phone or text us if your child is going to be absent for any reason. Our email address is info@hollytreepreschool.org.uk and this is the best way to let us know of an absence. The pre-school numbers are 023 80741410 or 07594 591935. You must let us know on the first morning of absence, giving the reason your child is away.

Dropping off and Collecting children –We try to encourage parents to drop children off at the gate, if possible, please. The children very quickly get used to saying goodbye at the gate and bringing in their own belongings. Staff will always be available to help them and we find that the children settle very quickly when they come in independently. We do of course understand that some of our new children may need more support from their parents to begin with. At the end of their session, children will be seen safely to their grown up, we again ask you to wait at the top of the path where you can be seen by the staff member seeing the children out. If you need to speak to a member of staff please wait until all of the children are in, at the start of the session, or seen safely to their adult at the end of the session. At 12pm we often have children leaving and arriving. Can we please ask if you are dropping off your child at this time that you wait for those children leaving to be seen safely to their grown up before sending your child in.

As always if you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's key person or Jo or Sue by calling or emailing.

Many thanks

The Hollytree Team