



## PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE CLUBS NEWSLETTER

We cannot believe how fast this term is going already! I'd like to welcome our 4 new families whose children have joined us this January. The children are settling in really easily and things are going well!

This term ends on Friday February 10<sup>th</sup> 2023 at our usual time of 3.00pm and we reopen on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February. The Easter holiday starts after we breakup on Friday March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023 and reopen on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2023. We always follow North Hinksey Primary term times and inset days, so if in doubt look here: <https://www.north-hinksey-school.org.uk/uploads/9/5/4/0/95408552/termdates2022-23-converted.pdf>

**Staff News...** We are thrilled with how well Emily has fitted into our team! She is wonderful!

We also have another new face this term as we have a student from Brookes studying Early Childhood Studies as her degree. Her name is Neave and we are loving having an extra pair of hands, and the children have already welcomed her, letting her read endless stories to them, play with her and generally getting to know her.

In a couple of weeks we will be having another new face in a student coming on her work placement from Abingdon and Witney College. They are undertaking their level 3, following a different route to Jasmine, who is nearing the end of her apprenticeship!

I would like to add that I am so proud of my brilliant team. We have experienced so much change over recent months (and years!) and everyone works so very hard, and yet we have lots of fun and they really are the best team anyone could wish for!

**First Aid...** All staff refreshed their First Aid training in a group session we ran on the inset day. This is a two day Paediatric First Aid course that is mandatory training for Early Years Professionals, that we must update every 3 years. So we are all First Aid trained (though statutory requirements is that a setting has one First trained member of staff on duty, at any one time). The course covers CPR, and using a defibrillator, which we currently do not have so if anyone knows of any ways we could fund raise to get one, please let me know!

**Strikes...**In case anyone is wondering none of us are in a union and we will not be striking along side teachers, so if schools close we will be open for business as usual!

**Numbers of Children...**We are experiencing a large number of applications for sessions. A number of you have increased sessions or started to use breakfast and after preschool club and even though we now have Emily we are still really busy. We are attempting to recruit another staff member (trained) as we have a number of children wishing to start before/ at Easter! Every day we have 20 or more children currently and practically all are staying all day. When you arrive at 9 and there aren't many of you in the queue, it is because half the children are already in Breakfast club!. Things are definitely getting back to normal within the Early Years sector. A number of settings are still closing (due to inadequate funding and low staff numbers), however we feel we are growing, which is reassuring!

**Listening and Attention...**We are working hard on getting the children to listen to us (and each other!) and pay attention.. these are extremely important skills they will need in the coming months especially if they are starting school in September!

Interestingly we have been observing children (as always!) and lots of them do not know that we "listen using our ears" "smell using our noses" and "see using our eyes" so feel free to help your children to listen and pay attention, and encourage them to remain focused for short periods of time.

We are noticing children are challenging us when we ask for help.. For example "Please can you walk inside!" with "I don't have to walk at home, I can run" or when we are trying to encourage tidying up "I don't have to tidy up at home!" We are trying to encourage the children to understand the consequences of throwing toys or leaving them all over the place, that it is not safe, and they need to help tidy up! When they start reception they tidy up a lot and will be expected to be independent in this. Tidying up can be made fun, you can use it as a sorting exercise, or practice counting, and we ask that you support us with this by doing this at home. We can tell the children that do have to help at home and those that do not! As I am sure you can imagine 22 children, leaving toys that they are no longer playing with, lying around is not a safe environment!

We have also noticed quite a few *older* children mouthing things or putting things in their mouths that are not safe such as "drinking muddy water" "putting stones in their mouths" "Eating paper". We stop them and explain why it is not safe and ask that you do the same at home, which I am sure you do, do, if you see them!

**Cosmic Yoga...**your child may mention we have been doing Yoga! In the Hive we are doing cosmic Yoga most days. Here is an example.. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKmRB2Z3q2s>

The idea is that the children love it, they are being active, getting to know their bodies and what it can do, they are following instructions and copying as well as listening and staying focused. It really is a great opportunity for learning all round!

**Weather and Clothing...**Please, as always make sure your child comes to Preschool with appropriate clothing to our ever changing weather! Hats, gloves and warm coats at the moment. If they have been toilet training also please make sure they have clothes on they can pull down to go to the toilet themselves. Also plenty of spares. We don't have lots of spares so if we don't have spares we will need to ring you to bring some in. ...

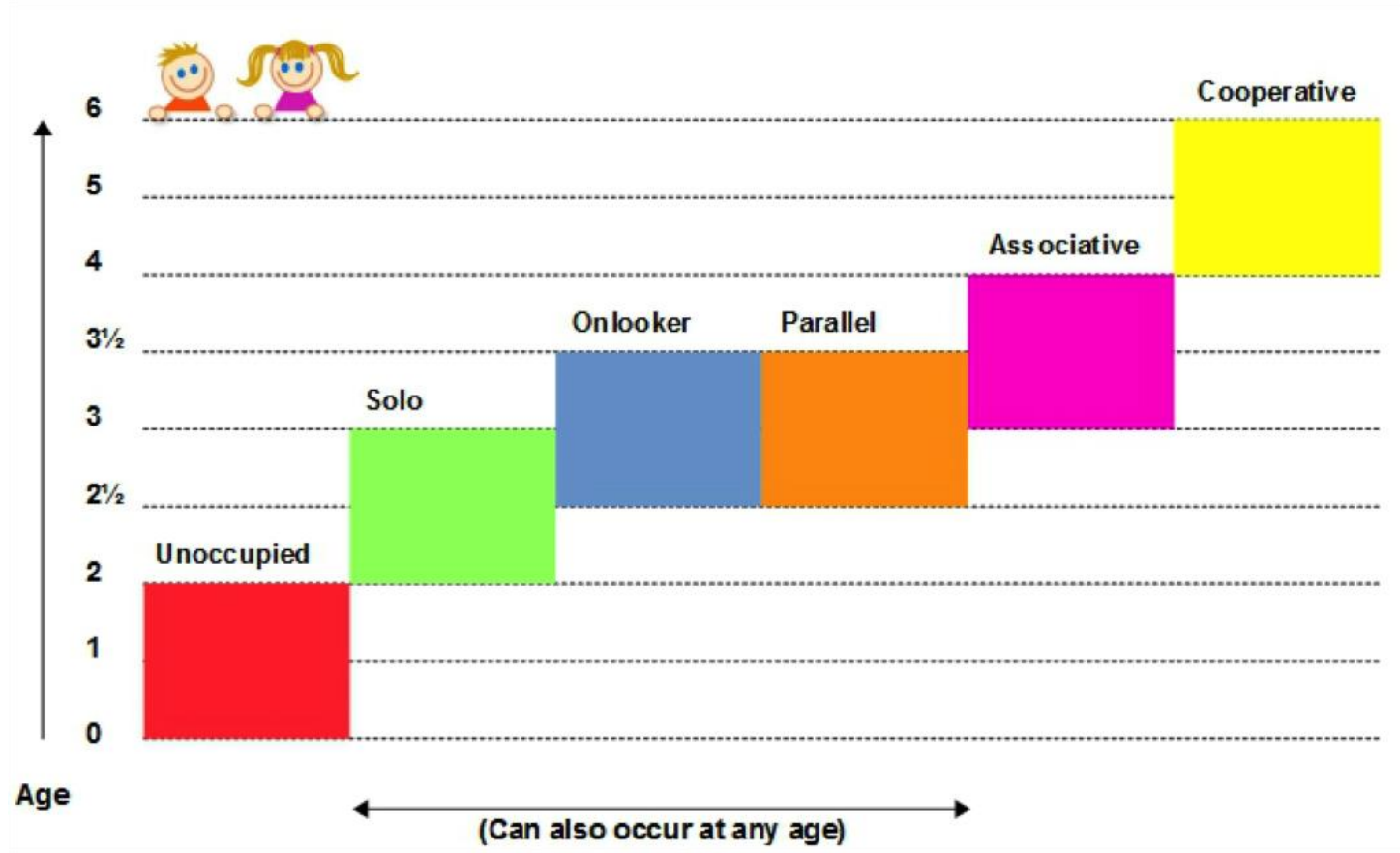
**Late collection and drop off...**We all know that sometimes things don't go to plan (hey, we work with small children!!), however we have a pretty tight routine, and that is why we have start and finish times. If you are late in the morning, it means it takes a member of staff away from the children to open and close gates etc. In after school club, if you are late it means staff are late going home as they are only here for 15 minutes after 5.00 in which time they need to tidy up, sweep and mop floors and clean all the toilets and empty the bins! Staff also have commitments for instance:- collect their own children from their childcare providers! In our terms and conditions which all families have signed, we state we will charge a late collection fee, at the hourly rate of the age group your child is in (£7.50 for 2 year olds and £7.80), however I have been reluctant to charge this because parents have said "just charge me" however it is not the point as we would just like you to not be late! We do reserve the right to terminate our contracts with parents, if the terms we provide our service are not met, as with any other business. I do hope you understand.

**Preschool...**I have shared this before apologies if you have seen it, but wanted to highlight with you some important aspects of Group Play for Children and how play is a natural mode of learning particularly for the youngest children.

### **Types of play**

Theories of play acknowledge that the play experience changes as a child grows and develops. Thus individuals who participate in group play with children of different ages will have different expectations and may thus be expected to react to the experience in different ways. Sociologist Mildred Parten studied children's play in the 1930s, and the six phases of play she identified (see Figure 1.1) still provide

practitioners with a useful means of describing and categorising different forms of play, as well as offering some useful evidence about a child’s developmental progress. In Preschool and indeed in After school club practitioners observe these different stages of play.



Up to two years of age, ‘unoccupied play’ is largely isolated and sensory. At this time the child, who may often seem somewhat passive, is gathering important benchmark information and experiences which will later be deployed in more active play.

From around the age of two, young children begin to use ‘solo play’ as a form of entertainment. Even though they’re in a group setting, they may appear unaware of other playmates.

Just before 3 ‘Onlooker play’ commonly emerges. Children will observe others playing, and may talk about what is happening in the play, but make no effort to actively participate. ‘Parallel play’, usually occurs at much the same time as onlooker play, as a side-by-side activity which may involve mimicry and

choosing similar toys. Though there is no communal engagement, this is an important precursor to fully interactive play.

From three, play becomes more overtly social as the child joins with others in 'associative play'. At this stage children engage, communicate, and begin the process of learning how to negotiate and get on with each other.

By four, children are usually ready to begin 'cooperative play' which can involve acting together as a team, showing deeper interest in their peers, striving towards a common goal, and joy of being social, with group initiatives defining late-stage early years children.

As with all elements of child development, these play phases can appear earlier or later, and as the above graphic also notes, some types of play may persist and recur at any age. Nevertheless, the important point is that any seemingly homogeneous preschool group engaging in group play together will almost certainly contain children whose play will be at different phases. Parten (1932)

Children's play is much more complicated than this and further models of Sociometric analysis and Social relationships within groups, of which you could read here <https://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk/group-play-children/> if you are interested.

With the support of trained Practitioners' and adults, observing and tuning in the childrens' needs, children within Early Year settings have opportunity to move through these types of play and be ready for co-operative learning. They hone their social skills and are able to become independent.

**Lastly...**As usual, if you have any concerns or would like to discuss anything further please feel free to contact me.

Ruth Vaughan

Setting Manager

[Nhps.manager1@gmail.com](mailto:Nhps.manager1@gmail.com)

Telephone 01865 794287