



## March 2021 Newsletter

Dear Families

The end of term is coming up again in a couple of weeks (Wednesday 31st March is our last day in the nursery school) and this spring term has certainly been challenging, especially in terms of a world pandemic. Please accept mine and the rest of the Grandpont team's gratitude for all the support you have given us over the past couple of months. We are all very much looking forward to the summer term, warmer days, lighter evenings and all being vaccinated!

Best Wishes

**Lisa Fern**

Headteacher

**World Book Day Walkabout-** A HUGE thank you to everyone who supported this event, either in decorating a window or in exploring the neighbourhood. We made just short of £1000. This will be split between SOFR and the nursery school. If you would still like to make a contribution you can do this here-

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/displayCharityCampaignPage.action?charityCampaignUrl=GrandpontWorldBookDayWalkabout>

**Nursery School parent meetings-** We recognise that we regularly have great conversations with parents at drop off and collection times and feel that our home/nursery links are good. However, we will be offering you an opportunity next term to have a more focused meeting around your child's learning and progress. More information and dates will be sent to you after the Easter break. In the meantime, if you have any concerns or questions about how your child is currently progressing then please do talk to your child's key person to arrange a conversation.

**Parent Survey regarding place allocations-** We are interested in collecting more information from our local community to gain a greater understanding of the requirements for childcare and early education for your children. This is to allow us to review our offer to come in line with local requirements. Covid-19 has been hugely detrimental to our finances and it has been a challenge filling places this year and we are keen to understand why and how we can amend our offer to support requirements. Over the next couple of days I will be sending out the survey. Please respond as this will really help us to plan for the future.

**Nursery Lunches-** We have been continuing to look at the possibilities of providing a hot lunch to the children at lunch times. Unfortunately we are not in a position to financially support this project from the nursery budget, which is our greatest barrier. However, I am keen to keep you informed that myself and a couple of governors, Amy and Francesca have some ideas/scenarios that we will be exploring further over the next week. I cannot promise that we will be able to get back to a hot meal at all but I am keen that you know that we are looking into the situation carefully. If you have any ideas or suggestions on the matter then please let us know.

**School Place Applications-** If your child is currently in Willow or Oak bubbles (and turn 5yrs old between September 2021 and September 2022) then you should have made an application to a primary school and you should have your child's place confirmed very soon. If you have not yet made an application then I suggest you do this as soon as possible at this link-

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/infant-and-primary-school>

If your child's birthday is between the 31st March and 31st August and you are considering deferring their place in reception for a year then please look here for more information-

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/defer-reception-application>

If you think this is something that interests you then please talk to a member of staff at Grandpont to talk about the possibility of staying on with us for another year. The decision to defer entry must be given careful consideration and we are certainly happy to talk to you about your individual circumstances.

**Changes of Clothes-** We are still keen to take any old/spare clothes off of your hands. If you have any 3, 4 and 5 year old aged clothes that are no longer required we will be happy to receive donations to top up our stocks. Donations of **trousers, socks and T-shirts/tops** would be most useful.



**Blossom Room request-** We are keen to make a collection of handbags for the children to play with. If you have any unused handbags with short straps that you are willing to donate to us we would be very grateful- Thank You.

**Fun in the woods-** We have started to use the woods more regularly now that the weather has improved and we are enjoying climbing over the large logs, playing in the tent and the Wood kitchen, as well as enjoying the bamboo forest! We are also experimenting with using cardboard, laid over the ground to try and reduce the nettle growth that is a problem for us each year. We are now looking for wood chippings to cover the cardboard to not only help with the aesthetics (looking less like a rubbish dump) but to also help us to establish more accessible areas for the children to play. If you know of anyone who has access to wood chippings or even a chipper then please let me know.

**Covid plans and Bubbles-** Some parents have spoken to me and other members of staff about when we might be able to mix our bubbles up and allow the children to play more freely across the space with each other. As throughout the pandemic, we have been

carefully considering our risk assessment in line with government advice and still feel that we are not in a position yet to make any changes to our current plans. However, we will continue to closely monitor the situation and we are starting to plan our own 'road map' and plan for the future. Fingers crossed we will have more information for you very soon.

I am also delighted to let you know that all eligible staff have now received their first vaccination and fingers crossed our under 50's will also be jabbed very soon.

**Holiday Club-** This will be running over the Easter break. We will be staffing this with some regular members of the Grandpont team and also with some casual members of staff that often support us in the holidays. We are now allowed to take children from other schools and settings, with the understanding that they only use our provision for the duration of the holiday. We are keeping the bubble size to a maximum of 16 children and places are quickly filling so if you have not yet made a booking I suggest you do this as soon as possible.

**South Oxford Family Room-** The SOFR management committee are meeting this week to make plans for reopening our stay and play sessions in April. More information to follow and please keep an eye on the SOFR facebook page. There may be some sessions available during the Easter break. Please spread the word!