

This newsletter gives you an update on PLAY@Churwell and PLAY@Asquith - the Before and After School Clubs and Holiday Playschemes run by Churwell Out of School Group.

Playscheme: This will be run from the Churwell setting for both pupils from Churwell and Asquith. The entrance is further along Westwoodside after the main school entrance.

Developments

2007-08 has seen building work at both Churwell School and Asquith School. The new facilities at Churwell School are working well and we look forward to moving to new accommodation at Asquith School.

What does this mean for me?

Asquith pupils: From September 2007 we have had the use of one classroom until the new Children's Centre accommodation was ready to move to. The move is now planned for May 2008. The space available is less than we had hoped for and so we had some challenges in planning how best to use the space to ensure we provide the best possible out of school care for pupils at Asquith.

Our plans are to use the nursery room as the main base for the Under 8's with the community rooms providing us extra space for different activities. We plan to use our walking bus from Asquith to Churwell for the Over 8's where we are able to provide more age appropriate facilities in separate rooms.

We appreciate that this may not be ideal for parents with children in different age ranges. We can provide care for Over 8's at Asquith but this will be at the discretion of the Playleader. Our main aim is to provide activities appropriate for the age of the child.

Change to organisational structure

In March 2007 we asked your views on our proposals to change the organisational structure of Churwell Out of School Group. The response from all those who replied was in favour of our proposals and we will taking forward our plans to become a company limited by guarantee under the Community Interest Company legal form.

We asked in March 2007 if you were interested in joining a Parent/Carers Forum as part of our new governance arrangements to help shape our provision. We will be in touch with those who responded but if any new parents are interested please give your contact details to Cath Dunn.

Annual General Meeting

As part of our current governance arrangements we should hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year. In the past we have recognised that it is difficult to get parents together for a meeting as you are either working / training during the day and may need childcare to attend evening events. Our use of a 'virtual' AGM for consulting on the organisational change worked well and we propose to try the same again to give you the opportunity to have your say on our out of school provision. We will give you more details when our Annual Report and Accounts are completed.

Fees for 2008-09

We will be increasing fees as follows from 1st September 2008:

Before school from 7:45 a.m	£3.75
After school to 6:00 p.m	£8.25
After school (2 hrs)	£6.50
Holiday playscheme	£21.00

Childcare Vouchers

In the 2007-08 financial year we received 26% of fees via childcare voucher schemes and dealt with seven separate childcare voucher companies in addition to DWP, Leeds City Council and Park Lane College.

Dealing with ten different organisations that run different schemes; use different redemption methods; and have different ways of providing remittance advices means we spend a lot of time on administration of these payments. We find that information on remittance advices is sometimes poor which can mean delay in linking the payment to your invoice.

We recognise that childcare vouchers are financially beneficial to parents and support you in paying for the childcare we provide. We would ask that you help us by:

- Asking your voucher company to include your full name and name of the child as a reference on remittance advices.
- Completing a Childcare Vouchers Redemption Form (available from our website) when you pay with vouchers or make a direct credit.

This will help us process vouchers and direct credits more efficiently and ensure your payment records are accurate and up to date. If you have any queries on this please speak to Cath Dunn.

Childcare Tax Credits

This is to advise you on our policy regarding requests from HMRC about applications for Childcare Tax Credits. HMRC often telephone to check children's details and whether they attend our provision. Our policy is not to respond to telephone requests as we have no way of verifying the caller. Our policy is to ask for the query in writing.

Leeds Quality Assurance (LQA)

We have now submitted our next module on Environment to the Leeds Quality Assurance team. The next step will be a visit to our settings from the LQA assessor. Feedback on the quality of our service is still welcome so we can show this to the assessors.

Feedback and complaints

We welcome feedback, both positive and negative, on our provision so we can learn and take forward any necessary action to improve our services.

You should discuss any issues that arise with the Playleader at your setting or the Children's Clubs Manager – Cath Dunn - so action can be taken to resolve the issue straight away. If you are not happy with the response and wish to make a written complaint to the voluntary management committee then details of how to do this are in the Parent/Carer Handbook.

I would like to remind you that the staff and volunteers of Churwell Out of School Group work hard to provide children and parents with an excellent service and deserve to be treated with respect. Our staff should not be subject to any form of abuse and neither should the children we care for be exposed to abusive behaviour from an adult.

Staff and volunteers of Churwell Out of School Group

Churwell Out of School Group

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