**Newsletter February 2024**

**A message from the Acting Head Teacher**

*Well the rainy weather remains! At least it is getting a little lighter and the daffodils are growing!*

*We have got a lot to look forward to over the next few weeks. Key workers have been arranging some special visitors in to nursery so we’ll keep you informed. We’re all looking forward to a PJ and hot chocolate day to celebrate world book day and of course there is photo day. The photos are always beautiful so we can’t wait to see them.*

*Joanne*

**Maternity Leave**

Shannon has started her maternity leave. We are going to miss Shannon and all she brings to Staghills but we are so excited for her and her family. To try to limit the transition for the children Kayleigh has become full time and will cover Shannon’s group. All the children know Kayleigh and she has been working with Shannon and the children over the last few weeks to ensure that the transition was as seamless as possible.

**Attendance**

We have to report attendance to our Governors each term. We aim for children to have **94%** attendance and during this first term **55%** of our children achieved this target with **74%** getting above **90%.** Please get in touch with key workers if there is anything we can help with.

**Communication and Language**

***What happens early, matters for a lifetime***

We know what happens in the early years lasts a life time. We also know that communication and language underpins all areas of learning. So we are working hard in nursery school to ensure children are on track with their development. Research tells us that what happens at home makes the biggest difference to learning and development. Playing together, singing, enjoying books, visiting the library, painting, drawing and finding out through play about letters, number and shapes are important activities to do at home.

The document ‘What to Expect When’ will give you more information or speak to your child’s key worker. It is on our website under the Parents and Carers/ Useful Documents tab or in the foyer at nursery.

If you are concerned about your child’s speech and language development, please speak to key workers or Joanne (SENDCo).

There is also a Speech and Language Therapy drop in the first Thursday of every month. It is at The Zone (The Old Fire Station in Rawtenstall) between 1-2pm. The next one is on the 7th March.

**Parent Consultations**

Our parent consultations are ongoing over the next couple of weeks. If you are unsure of your time slot, please talk to key workers and they will let you know.

**Oral Hygiene**

We have had a special visitor in Hazel Room to talk to us about the importance of brushing our teeth and looking after them. We hope the children are talking about healthy teeth with you at home.

There are some more charts in the foyer as we know so many children have been motivated by them which is great to hear.

At snack time and meal times we provide the children with a drink of milk or water. If children are bringing a packed lunch we ask you to send them in with a sugar free drink.

Here is the Government Guidance on drinks and bottles and cups.

Water and milk are the only safe drinks to give children in regard to their oral health. Fruit juices and smoothies should not form part of a young child’s daily diet.

As well as limiting the amount of free sugars children eat or drink, you should also make sure that they only have food or drinks that contain sugar at mealtimes. This is because, the more often their teeth come into contact with sugar, the more likely they will be to get tooth decay. Children should avoid food and drinks containing free sugars before bedtime and overnight.

**Drinking bottles and cups**

What children drink from can impact their oral health.

You should only give babies bottles of breast milk, formula milk, or boiled water that has cooled down.

From 6 months old, you can offer babies drinks in open-top cups. These are cups with no lids, which spill if knocked over. These cups can help children develop their sipping skills. This strengthens their face muscles, which helps them to bite, chew and talk.

When introducing open-top cups, start with smaller cups or those with handles. These are easier for babies to grip. Offer a small amount of water at first, and gradually increase this over time.

You may need to show babies how to use the cup and help them to hold it at first. Some babies may need to use a sipping cup or beaker with a spout before they can use an open-top cup. If this is the case, you should make sure that the spout does not have a valve, that drinks can freely flow through it, and that babies do not need to suck.

From 12 months old onwards, you should encourage children to have all drinks in open-top cups. From this point, avoid using any bottles or cups that need children to suck, like those with soft teats or valves.

**Easter Holidays**

We will be sending out a Booking Form in this month’s invoice and then the FINAL date for booking on is the 21st March. We have extended this date but please, please could we have your forms as soon as possible then we can plan the staffing for the week.

**School Jotter** 

All our newsletters will be sent over School Jotter in the following weeks. You can download School Jotter onto your phone. Go to the App Store (or alternative) and download the Jotter app. Search for Staghills Nursery School.

**Dates for your Diary**

6th and 7Th March 2024 – Photos days. More information will be shared nearer the time.

8th March – World Book Day PJ and Hot Chocolate

28th March 2024 – Parents invited to attend an Easter Egg Hunt with children where there will be a special visitor!

28th March 2024 – Nursery Closes for all for Easter.