

Dear mums, dads and carers,

February 2017 Newsletter

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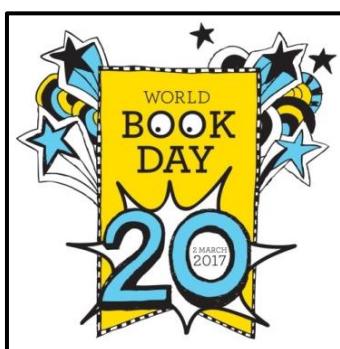
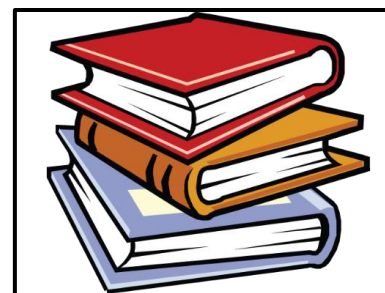
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New book swap service at Ambler

The Children's Centre now hosts a Book Swap service as part of the council's Islington Reads campaign, a community collaboration set up to share reading skills through different venues across the borough. It's a quick and no-hassle way of children finding interesting books to read, without having to sign-up for library membership. Anyone can simply pick up a book from our Outreach Hall to take home, or replace it with one of their own they want to pass on to promote reading and literacy.



World Book Day happening soon

We are celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 2nd March. On that particular day, children can dress up as a character from a book of their choice to show all their friends what they love reading most. Parents and carers are encouraged to get their children involved in the festivities, helping create whole costumes (like Wally from Where's Wally) or single props (like the Cat's Hat from Dr Seuss's series) which come from their favourite books. Please also bring the book which relates to your child's character to Ambler so it can be shared with everyone else. It is a great day dedicated to books and a celebration of reading, so we hope you will all join in!

Are you aware of new tax-free childcare?

The government is introducing Tax-Free Childcare soon, which will be available to around 2 million households to help with the cost of childcare. They say it'll enable more parents to go to work, providing greater security for their families. Please go to the following link to see if this could be of benefit to your family:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tax-free-childcare-10-things-parents-should-know>

Checking eligibility for 30 hours childcare

From September, some 3 and 4 year olds will be entitled to 30 hours per week of free childcare, under a new government scheme. The extended entitlement is intended to support working parents with the cost of childcare. You will need to check your eligibility before your child can be offered a place. If eligible, you will receive a code to take to the provider of your choice together with your National Insurance Number and your child's date of birth. As the online eligibility checker is not currently available, some of our families with children the correct age have been asked to complete a form to indicate if they think they meet the eligibility criteria or not. If you haven't received a form or want to know more, please speak to the Children's Centre admin office.



Promoting oral health by toothbrushing

The entire Children's Centre, including Reception classes, are participating in a supervised brushing programme being held in partnership with Camden and Islington Public Health. Children will be supported with 'dry brushing' their teeth during the day and our staff have received training from colleagues in public health. Please make sure you have returned a consent form for your child to take part in this positive activity with all their friends.

Reception heading on trip to a local café

Both our Reception classes will soon be heading to a local café so they can enjoy a 'real life' experience similar to their 'make believe' version at Ambler. They'll be going to Butler & Booth in small groups, which will support their role play and aid their social interactions. It's also a good chance for them to get comfortable exploring the local area and understanding concepts such as paying for food or service. If you would like to volunteer to accompany a group please just let Lorna or Naomi know your availability. Two visits will be taking place each Monday and all families should already have had a letter as the trips were originally planned for before the half term holidays but had to be rearranged. Please just make sure you've returned the permission slip and any payment.

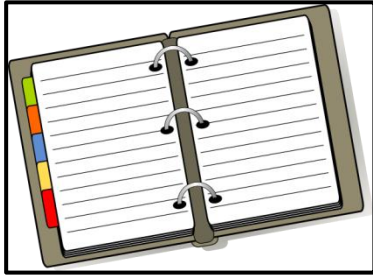


Saying hello to Rightway's Matt and Marek

Matt and Marek from Rightway Sports (pictured from left to right) are now delivering weekly physical education sessions to small groups from our Reception class, with their company already having worked with the school for more than 9 years. They help our children develop physical skills as well as keeping fit and learning to work as a team. All Wednesday sessions are based on our DREAMS ethos, building life skills which will help children thrive in the future.

Introducing Ambler's music teacher

Harriet Stobart is the music teacher in Nursery and Reception who takes weekly sessions with small groups of children. All children have an opportunity during these Friday sessions to play on a musical instrument and are taught to explore concepts such as timbre, rhythm and percussion. They are short sessions in line with developmental expectations of children at these ages. Please say hello if you see Harriet around Ambler!



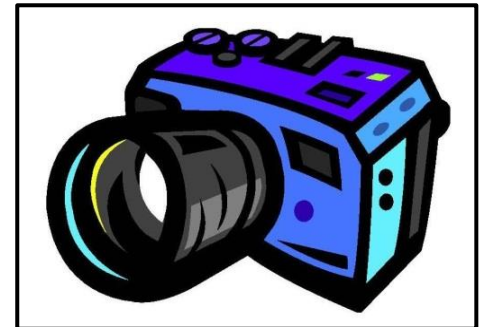
Term dates for next academic year

To help with everyone's forward planning, term dates for next academic year have been agreed and are included at the end of this newsletter. Please remember there are also 5 Inset days which will be taken within the term dates. The Inset dates will be decided by our Headteacher, in consultation with the governing body, so just read future newsletters to make sure you're aware of when there's no childcare at Ambler. We'll also be adding more information to the term dates in due course so Children's Centre families with All Year Round contracts know when they'll be attending too.

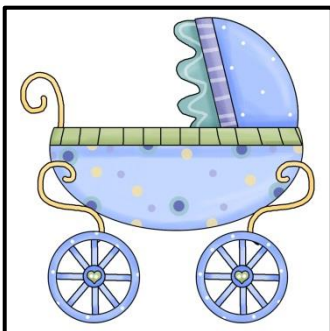
Class photos arranged for May

A photographer will be visiting Ambler on Friday 26th May to take group/class photos of our children, which will be a nice way to end the term. The specific times are:

- 9am – Baby Room**
- 9.20am – Toddler Room**
- 9.40am – Nursery 1/Foxes**
- 10am – Nursery 2/Squirrels**
- 10.20am – Reception Blue**
- 10.40am – Reception Green**



Please make sure your child arrives in their normal room in plenty of time to be taken through to the hall by staff. If your child would not normally be at Ambler when their photo is due to be taken (such as afternoon children or those who come from Monday to Wednesday) you can still bring them in for the photo shoot, but you must accompany them at all times.



Buggy store at breaking point

Our Buggy Store gets busier throughout the year as more children join us and is fast approaching breaking point. From now on the first few families to arrive at Ambler must fold up their buggies and hang them on the metal rack in the buggy store. This will allow more space for those buggies arriving later in the day and means the corridor will be kept free of any obstructions for health and safety reasons.

Who to speak to and governance

We aim to have open communication. Your child's key person and then the room lead will be the people you have most contact with. However, there may be times when you want more support from the senior leadership team of **Michael Jarrett**, Head of Centre, **Honoria Lukulay**, Assistant Head, or **Lorna Prynne**, Early Years Foundation Stage Co-coordinator.

Our Advisory Board parents are **Christine Langford** and **Ram Deb. Mary Stevens**, parent of a Nursery child, is also on the Governing Body.

Communication and feedback

Each child has a pigeonhole labelled with his/her name. Please check this daily as this is where you will find any up to date communications from us. If you have any compliments, complaints or suggestions to help us improve our services for all our children and families, please fill in a feedback form (available from the foyer).

Very best wishes,

The Ambler Team



Term dates and holidays

BR = Baby Room, TR = Toddler Room, N = Nursery
TTO = Term Time Only, AYR = All Year Round

SPRING TERM – 2017

Tuesday 28th February

Pancake Day/Shrove Tuesday

Friday 24th March

Red Nose Day

Monday 3rd April to Thursday 13th April

EASTER HOLS - Open for AYR children in BR, TR and N/Reception Playscheme only

Friday 14th April and Monday 17th April

Children's Centre and school closed for Bank Holidays

SUMMER TERM – 2017

Tuesday 18th April

First day of term for BR, TR and N/Reception

Monday 1st May and Monday 29th May

Children's Centre and school closed for Bank Holidays

Tuesday 30th May to Friday 2nd June

HALF TERM HOLS - Open for AYR children in BR, TR and N/Reception Playscheme only

Friday 21st July

Last day of term – school and CC closes at 2pm for funded places
BR, TR and N open as normal for paying parents

Monday 24th July to Thursday 17th August

SUMMER HOLS - Open for AYR children in BR, TR and N/Reception Playscheme only



Term dates and holidays

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AUTUMN TERM – 2017

Monday 4th September 2017

First day of term

Monday 23rd October to Friday 27th October 2017

HALF TERM HOLS

Thursday 21st December 2017

Last day of term

SPRING TERM – 2018

Wednesday 3rd January 2018

First day of term

Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February 2018

HALF TERM HOLS

Thursday 29th March 2018

Last day of term

SUMMER TERM – 2018

Monday 16th April 2018

First day of term

Monday 28th May to Friday 1st June 2018

HALF TERM HOLS

Friday 20th July 2018

Last day of term