

Dear mums, dads and carers,

November 2016 Newsletter

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Transitions to new rooms

The end of Autumn Term is approaching and many children are moving rooms in January. If your child is one of them, there are meetings organized to discuss the transition process. It's very important you attend one as it'll provide an opportunity to ask questions in anticipation of the big change. You'll also be able to meet staff members who work in your child's new room. The meetings are being held on **Tuesday 13th December at 8.30am and 12.00pm.**

A lot of our families will also be contacted in the coming weeks to provide proof of residence and income, for new contracts. Please just liaise with the admin office to ensure everything is completed before the end of term.

Core day consultation outcome

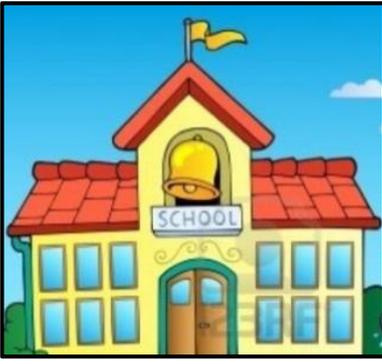
Thanks to everyone who gave their opinion on the proposed changes to our 'core day' services. As you know, we were considering making a minor change to timings so all children got their full entitlement of early education. 75% of respondents agreed that changing the times to 9.15am-3.15pm was the best course of action. This was a clear outcome and means we will continue providing a service that meets the needs of the majority. These new hours for 'core day' services will come into effect from January 2017 onwards. If you would like to discuss the change further, there will be a coffee morning at **9.30am on Tuesday 6th December.**

Winter Fair

The annual Winter Fair is being held on **Thursday 1st December, from 3.30pm to 5.30pm.** Friends of Ambler have lots of fun planned, including craft and game stalls, a photo booth, face painting, Santa's grotto and a raffle. They would also love any donations of festive finger food to sell, so get in touch if you can help sell raffle tickets or encourage baking in the week leading up to the fair.

Reception will also be holding a winter show on **Tuesday 20th December at 10am**, so please speak to staff for details.





Primary school applications

Just a reminder that all children who are currently in Nursery are due to start primary school next September, so please remember to apply online before the deadline of **15th January 2017**. To do so, Islington residents need to go to **www.islington.gov.uk/admissions**, while non-Islington residents should apply directly with their local council. If you need support, Islington residents can call the admissions team on 02075275515. Internet access is also available at local libraries and on public computers at 222 Upper Street.

Early Childhood changes

Work to reshape the early childhood offer in Islington has been underway since April and parents were invited to help shape the practical details of how early childhood services will work in future, with 623 responses to the consultation received. Many parents said that Islington's children's centres offer vital services; families are happy with services and want them to continue.

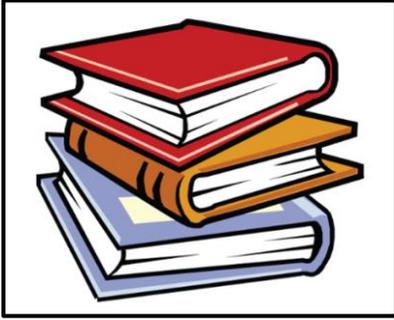
The council and NHS understand that some parents feel anxious about changing valued services and there will be detailed consultations about any changes to children's centres in the new year. The full feedback document which contains much more information is available from the admin office upon request or if you have any further questions or comments please send them to **earlychildhoodtransformation@islington.gov.uk**

Changes to funding for Nursery education

Councillor Joe Caluori has told families the government is planning to change the way it funds nursery education, which could mean cuts to Islington of up to 10%. The new funding formula could result in funding for early education for some nursery schools and children's centres being as much as halved in two years' time. Some funding that has previously gone to council-supported Nursery schools and children's centres will now go to other settings, in particular the private sector.

[Nursery schools and children's centres] are legally required to employ qualified teaching staff, unlike private sector nurseries. Research has shown that employing qualified teachers makes a significant difference to the quality of early years education and children's educational outcomes. If you are concerned about these proposals, please take a moment to sign the petition to 'Save State-Funded Nursery Schools' as soon as you can at **<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/171052>**





Reception reading workshops

Our Reception staff are holding workshops for parents who want more information about reading techniques that can be used to support their children at home. They are taking place on **Monday 5th December at 9am and 2pm**, as well as on **Tuesday 6th December at 2pm**, with the possibility of further dates depending on demand. The workshops will cater for less than 15 parents at a time and discussions can be tailored to your child's personal circumstances. Please speak

to Lorna directly to book a place or arrange an alternative.

Also, please remember to ensure your child brings their bookbag to school every day as staff may still be able to have additional one-to-one reading time with your child even if it's not their allocated reading day.

Picking up arrangements for all children

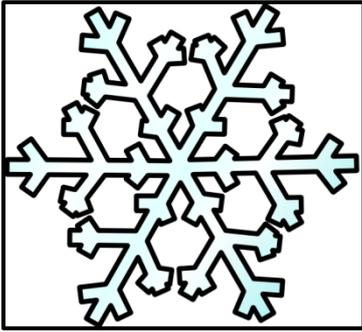
We are introducing a requirement that only people of 16 years of age and above are allowed to collect children. We are also introducing a formalised process for regular collections with prior consent, such as childminders or family members who have to pickup repeatedly. In the past, families will have written a letter or sent an email stating who has permission to collect their children. All families who want these arrangements to continue must now complete a 'Collection Consent Form'.

Nobody who has been permitted to collect because of an old letter or email will be able to do so again from the Children's Centre unless a new form has been completed. If you need to arrange infrequent collections, such as when you're running late from an appointment or caught behind at work, the current password system will remain in place. If you have any questions in the meantime please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Reception entrance times

Families in our Reception classes should be aware that the doors to the usual entrance from the playground are closed promptly at 9am. Any child arriving after this time must go to the main school entrance and sign in using the Inventory computer system. This ensures that all Reception children are recorded on our electronic registers and means there would be no issues in case of a fire, as we will know exactly what pupils are on site and no child will go unaccounted for. This is a very important safeguarding issue and parents must follow the instructions of all staff members regarding these procedures, for the safety of all the children in our care.





Dressing for winter weather

The clocks have gone back and the nights are drawing in, so please make sure your child comes to Ambler in clothing that's appropriate for the increasingly wintry weather. We want children to be outside as much as possible, accessing the full curriculum and undertaking physical activity. They still need to wear warm, weatherproof coats, gloves and hats though to make sure they don't catch any bugs...

School App

Ambler has a brand new way of communicating with parents, via our very own school App. This allows us to keep you all updated with information, news, calendar events and contact information. It is like a mini website on the go, giving you access to what's going on at Ambler, at the touch of a button.

You can download the App from the Google Play, Android marketplace or the Apple App Store depending on which mobile phone or device you use. Phones that are Nokia- or Windows-based can easily download the app via a mobile site at www.ourschoolsapp.com/m

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

AUTUMN TERM – 2016/17

Wednesday 21st December

Last day of term for all children

SPRING TERM – 2016/17

Tuesday 3rd January

Children's Centre and school closed for Inset day

Wednesday 4th January

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

Monday 13th February to Friday 17th February

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

Monday 20th February

Children's Centre and school closed for Inset 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 – 2016/17

Tuesday 18th April

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

Monday 29th 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