

Dear mums, dads and carers,

## October 2017 Newsletter

### Page 1

Goodbye message from Honoria  
Survey re: online-only newsletters  
Slip to complete and return

### Page 2

Half term playscheme for Reception  
Free places available for 2 YOs  
30 hours reminder for Toddlers

### Page 3

School open evening for applicants  
Photo order deadline approaching  
Get involved with Friends of Ambler

### A goodbye message from Honoria

“As I write this, I experience mixed feelings of sadness and joy. My last day at Ambler will be Friday 27th October. The past 10 years working at Ambler Children’s Centre has been a wonderful adventure and journey of learning about our children and families, working together with other professionals to meet the needs of this unique population. I have professionally and personally grown so much and it’s all because of you - the parents, children and staff. For this, I say a big **THANK YOU!** Some new changes caused by budget cuts have forced me to give up my job and take redundancy. However, it’s about time for me to travel to my country of birth for a while before looking for another job. No matter where I end up, I will continue to work with families. I wish everyone well.” We’re holding a singing session on **Friday 20th October at 9.30am** to mark this sad occasion and we’d love to see everyone there, so just come to the Children’s Centre a few minutes beforehand.



### Survey re: online-only newsletters

Ambler is increasingly focused on sustainability and we want to change the way our newsletters are published so it’s kinder to the environment. At our busiest point in the academic year we are printing newsletters for around 175 children, which works out at more than 500 pages of paper used on every edition! As a result, we’d like to publish future newsletters online only, with families being sent a link through the new ‘**School Gateway**’ app. We’d still print out a handful of hard copies for families without any internet access, which would be available from the foyer. However, before making this change we wanted to find out your thoughts, so please complete our survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HDTZ873> or complete and hand the slip below to the Children’s Centre admin office by **Friday 3rd November**. (Please don’t use both methods of responding as you’d be voting twice!)



Do you think that Ambler newsletters should only be published online in future, with just a few physical copies available for families without internet access?

Yes

No

Don’t know

### Half-term playscheme for Reception

Some playscheme places are still available for Reception pupils during the half-term holidays. These provide working and studying families with childcare outside of school terms. We can accept ex-pupils (children who were in the Nursery) and those who currently use our extended day services. Places are allocated first to Islington residents, second to those who work in the borough, and third to other applicants. A week's place from **8.00am-6.00pm costs £137.50**. Concessionary rates are also available for those on work-based benefits. Please speak to the Children's Centre admin office for more details.



### Free places available for two year olds

We still have a few 'free' part-time places in our Toddler Room. Your child could be eligible for one of the 15-hour a week government-funded places if any of the following apply: *you are on benefits, have a low income, your child has special educational needs/a disability, your child is adopted*. Just complete the form online at [www.islington.gov.uk/free2](http://www.islington.gov.uk/free2) and see if you're eligible. We're particularly interested in children who are born between September 2015 and December 2015, as their eligibility would start next term. If you have any questions please speak to the Children's Centre admin office.



### 30 hours reminder for Toddler Room children

All children in Toddler Room who are going to be transitioning to Nursery next term should find out now if they are eligible for an additional 15 hours of free childcare after the move. Some families will be able to access up to 30 hours of free childcare a week, rather than the universal 15 hours. Parents can check their eligibility by going to <https://childcare-support.tax.service.gov.uk> If you are eligible, you'll receive an 11 digit code (called a DERN number). You will then have to complete a form which includes the key details to allow us to verify the code, including your NI number and the child's date of birth. We won't be able to offer any families 30 hours childcare without this form being completed. Before starting your application it is also worth checking out the government's information portal at <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> to investigate your options on issues like childcare vouchers and tax-free childcare.





### **Open evening for primary school applications**

All children who are currently in Nursery class are due to start primary school next September, so please make sure to apply online before the deadline of **15th January 2018**. It is very important that applications are made on time as otherwise you may miss out on your favoured choice of schools. To do so, Islington residents need to go to

**[www.islington.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.islington.gov.uk/admissions)**, while non-Islington

residents should apply directly with their local council. There is no automatic transfer from our Nursery to our Reception class, even if you already have other siblings in the school. If you are interested in joining the school and want to find out more, our Headteacher is hosting an Open Evening on **Wednesday 13th December at 5pm**, so just let the Children's Centre admin office know that you'd like to attend.

### **Individual photograph order deadline approaching**

Having seen the results of this month's individual photo-shoots, we're sure you'll agree we've got a particularly photographic group of children at Ambler! All our families should have received their proof cards from Ward Hendry by now, so this is a final reminder that the deadline for purchase is **Thursday 2nd November**. You can order online using the ID code on your proof card or put the exact cash/cheque in the pack and return it to the Children's Centre admin office.



### **Get involved with Friends of Ambler**

Friends of Ambler are a fantastic group of parents and carers who aid the Children's Centre in providing the best possible learning environment. They're always arranging amazing events so our families can have fun and help raise much-needed funds at the same time. On **Wednesday 18th October** they've organized a '**Welcome to Ambler**' disco for Reception children and their parents/carers, with a 'Grow Ambler' **Gardening Day** taking place on **Sunday 19th November** and the annual '**Winter Fair**' set for **Monday 4th December**.

Friends of Ambler are also on the lookout for new members of the main committee. If you'd like to stand or nominate someone, please email **[friendsofambler@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofambler@gmail.com)** before half term. They also require more elected members for fundraising, sponsorship/business liaison and communications management, so please get in touch if you have something to contribute.

### **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 **Lorna Prynne**, Children's Centre and EYFS Lead, **Honorita Lukulay**, Assistant Head, or **Selina Laville**, Daycare Manager.

### **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. The 'School Gateway' service also allows us to share information with parents/carers more quickly via email, text messages, online and smartphone app. 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 – 2017**

**Monday 23rd October to Friday 27th October 2017**

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

**Monday 30th October 2017**

**Children's Centre and school closed for Inset Day**

**Wednesday 20th December 2017**

Last day of term – school and CC closes at 2pm for TTO places  
BR, TR and N open later for AYR children

**Thursday 21st December 2017**

**Children's Centre and school closed for Inset Day**

### **SPRING TERM – 2018**

**Wednesday 3rd January 2018**

First day back for all children

**Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February 2018**

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

**Thursday 29th March 2018**

Last day of term for TTO children

**Friday 30th March and Monday 2nd April 2018**

Children's Centre and school closed for Bank Holidays

**Tuesday 3rd April to Friday 13th April 2018**

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

### **SUMMER TERM – 2018**

**Monday 16th April 2018**

First day back for TTO children

**Monday 7th May and Monday 28th May 2018**

Children's Centre and school closed for Bank Holiday

**Tuesday 29th May to Friday 1st June 2018**

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

**Friday 20th July 2018**

Last day of term – school and CC closes at 2pm for funded places  
BR, TR and N open later for AYR children

**Monday 23rd July to Thursday 17th August 2018**

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