

Dear mums, dads and carers,

September 2017 Newsletter

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Welcome to the Autumn Term!

There have been lots of new children joining Ambler Children's Centre since the start of this academic year and many of our existing children have moved into different rooms. We hope that by now most will have settled into comfortable routines as the final few admissions begin their time here. We know you'll all do your best make any new parents/carers feel welcome...



Centre's new management structure

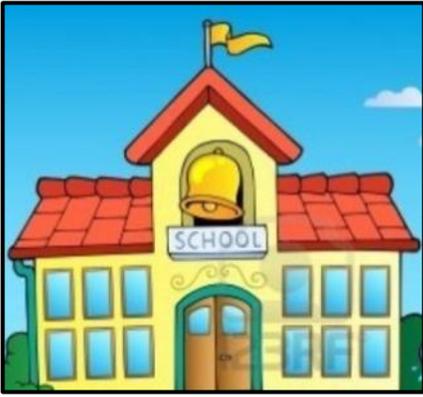
Significant funding cuts have forced a restructure of Early Years services across our borough and meant the Children's Centre had to change its management structure. Unfortunately this resulted in the departure of our previous head, **Michael Jarrett**. However, **Lorna Prynne** has been appointed as the interim Children's Centre Lead and **Selina Laville** as the Daycare Manager. **Honorita Lukulay**, Assistant Head, will also remain at the centre for a period of time and will continue in her current role. This should ensure as smooth a transition as possible for our children and staff. If you have any questions or concerns about these developments please don't hesitate to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership team.



Saying hello to our new staff

A few new faces have joined our staff team this term, so hopefully by now you'll all have met **Paola**, an Early Years Educator in Toddler Room, **Sofia**, the teacher in Reception Green, and **Candice**, the teacher in Nursery 2/Squirrels. Candice will be with us until Christmas as long-term agency cover and the children already know her, as

she's worked in Nursery and Reception previously. This will ensure as much continuity as possible for the children, but please see your keyperson if you have any concerns. A newly recruited teacher is set to join Nursery permanently in January after references and vetting checks are approved.



Nursery children must apply for primary schools

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**.

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.

There is no automatic transfer from our Nursery to our Reception class, even if you already have other siblings in the school. It is very important that applications are made

on time as otherwise you may miss out on your favoured choice of schools. If you need support, call the School Admissions team on 02075275515. Internet access is also available at local libraries and on public computers at 222 Upper Street.

Toddlers should check out 30 hours childcare

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.



Individual photographs being taken soon

Ward Hendry will be visiting the Children's Centre on Thursday 5th October to take individual portraits of our children. The sessions are scheduled for

Reception Blue & Green at 9.00am – 9.45am

Toddler Room at 9.45am – 10.30am

Baby Room at 10.30am – 11.00am

Nursery 1 & 2 at 11.00am – 12.00pm

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 must accompany them at all times.

Schoolgateway

Introducing the new app we'll be using to communicate

We've introduced a new service at Ambler called 'School Gateway' which allows us to share information with parents/carers more quickly via email, text, online and smartphone app. Please save the number **0203 3899111** in your phone as 'Ambler' to ensure you receive our text messages. All you need to register is your email address and mobile number. If you have a smartphone, please download School Gateway from your app store. The app shows the same information as the website PLUS you can message the school for FREE. Alternatively visit the website www.schoolgateway.com and click on 'New User'. You'll receive a text message with a PIN number which you can use to log in. **If you're having trouble logging in, it may be because we don't have your current email and mobile phone number on record.** If so, please just speak to the Children's Centre admin office and we'll update your details.



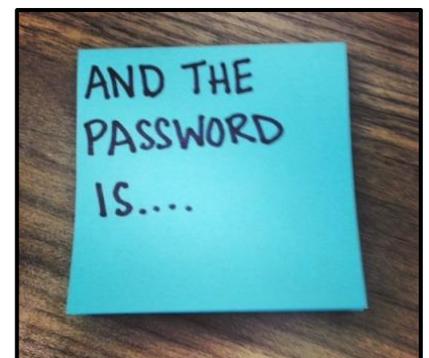
Reminder on Reception entrance times

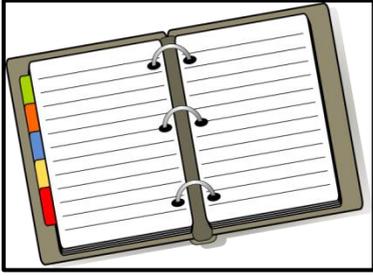
Families in our Reception classes should be aware that the doors to the usual entrance from the playground are closed promptly at 9am. **Any child arriving after this time must go to the main school entrance off of Blackstock Road and sign in using the Inentry computer system.** This ensures that all 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.

Picking up arrangements for all children

We just wanted to remind parents that there are two separate ways that you can get someone else to pick up your child from Ambler Children's Centre – our password system or via a collection consent form. For rare occasions you just need to tell both the room and admin office if someone else will be picking up your child, giving that person's name and a password. The person must give the password on their arrival at Ambler or we will not allow your child to leave with them. If a nanny or family member needs to pick up your child on a regular basis please just provide written permission for this along with a photo on a collection consent form. Just speak to your child's keyperson or the Children's Centre admin office if you want further details.





Notice of Inset days for this academic year

The remaining Inset days of this academic year will be on on **Monday 30th October** and **Thursday 21st December**.

Ambler is totally closed with no childcare being offered on those dates, although charges are still applied within the week they occur. There is still one further date which will be agreed in due course by our Headteacher, in consultation with the

governing body, so make sure to read future newsletters to so you're aware it's announced.

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