

Dear mums, dads and carers,

December 2015 Newsletter

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Interim management arrangements

Michael Jarrett is on adoption leave for the rest of this academic year, so interim management arrangements are in place. Honoria Lukulay, assistant head of centre, and Lorna Prynne, Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator, will be taking on aspects of his role. They'll work even closer with Juliet Benis, headteacher of the School and Children's Centre. Meanwhile, Leona Yearwood, early years practitioner, will organise some day-to-day childcare services, and Michael Haddon, senior admin officer, is assuming some wider financial tasks. Please speak to your keyperson or the Senior Leadership Team if you have any questions.



Transitions to new rooms

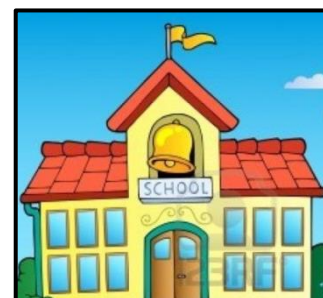


The end of Autumn Term is approaching and many children will be changing rooms in January. If your child is one of them, there is a meeting organized to discuss the transition process. It's very important you attend as it'll help you understand the process and provide an opportunity to ask questions in anticipation to the move. You'll also be able to meet staff members who work in your child's new room. The meetings are being held on Thursday 10th December

at 9.00am and Thursday 10th December at 5:00pm. Please just let the admin team know which of these meetings you will be attending. Some families will also be accessing government-funded hours in Nursery for the first time, where fees tend to drop dramatically. If so, please speak to the admin office to ensure you're budgeting the right amount of fees next term.

Primary school applications

All children currently in Nursery are due to start primary school next September, so please apply online before the deadline of **15th January 2016**. If your child is born between 1st September 2011 and 31st August 2012 please go to www.islington.gov.uk/admissions to do so. If you need support, just contact the School Admissions team on 020 7527 5515. Free internet access is also available at local libraries and on public access computers at 222 Upper Street.



Free places for two year olds

We still have a few 'free' part-time places in our Toddler Room this January. 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, earn less than £16,190, your child has special educational needs/a disability, your child is adopted.* Just complete the form online at www.islington.gov.uk/free2 and see if you're eligible. We will be particularly keen to take children born between 1st September 2013 and 31st December 2013, but may still be able to take slightly older children if you are quick!



Christmas events and activities

We've lots of activities planned as 2015 comes to a close. The **Winter Fair** is on Tuesday 15th December at 3.30pm. The event is run by Friends of Ambler and they need you to make it a fantastic event! Please email them at friendsofambler@gmail.com or leave your details with the school office if you can help on the day or beforehand.

Children from both Reception classes will be performing 'Snowman at Sunset' at our **Winter Show** on Wednesday 16th December at 10am. This festive tale of sharing in difficult circumstances is open to all families, so please arrive promptly at the usual Reception entrance so staff can let you in when the show is ready to start!



Santa is making a stop-off at our **Stay and Play** on Wednesday 16th December from 9.30am. He's taking time out of his busy schedule to meet children at Ambler and enjoy the Christmas songs and festive activities, such as decoration and card making. It costs £1 per child to see Santa in his grotto and he'll be doing what he does best - giving each child a present! (please be aware the normal 50p entry to Stay and Play still applies...)

Playscheme for Reception in Xmas holidays

We are offering playscheme places for Reception pupils on Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd December. These provide working and studying families with childcare when the school is on holiday for Christmas. We can accept ex-pupils (children who were in day-care) and those who currently use our extended day services, up to the age of six. Places are allocated first to Islington residents, second to those who work in the borough, and third to other applicants. A two day place from 8.30am-5.30pm costs £48.12 or a two day place from 9.30am-3.30pm costs £36.08. Concessionary rates are also available for those on benefits. Please speak to the Children's Centre admin office for more details.



Holiday weeks and closure dates

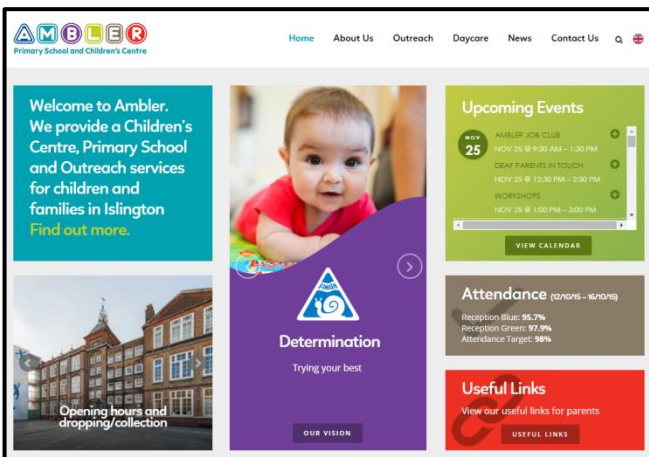
All families should be aware the annual two week closure is now differs from previous notice. The Centre will be closed completely from Friday 19th August to Friday 2nd September. There are then two INSET days at the start of the next academic year, making the first day back Wednesday 7th September.

For families whose children have 'all year round places,' please note the current academic year has one more holiday week than usual. This is because leap years have an extra day in February which build up over time to create an extra week. As such, this academic year has 50 charging weeks – 39 in term time and 11 in holidays.



New website

Our new website is now up running and can be accessed directly at www.amblerchildrenscentre.co.uk or via the previous holding page at www.ambler.islington.sch.uk (in case you already have that address bookmarked). In time you will be able to subscribe to our upcoming events or term dates and read these newsletters online. If you have any suggestions on what you'd like to see more of online please let us know via childrenscentre@ambler.islington.sch.uk



Upcoming activities

We often have upcoming activities that you may be interested in, so please pick up a leaflet from the admin office. For example, if you want to gain experience and learn new skills, we're searching for volunteers to help out at the Children's Centre. You can come along on Wednesday 9th December at 11am to find out what's on offer. Also, if you're having problems managing your child's behavior and want to learn new strategies to manage this, sign up to the workshop being held on Friday 11th December at 9.30am. Just speak to the admin office for more information.



Deaf group

A new support group for deaf parents is starting in January to offer information, support and advice. If you're a deaf parent or deaf parent expecting a child and want to mix with other deaf families, then this group is for you! Come along on the second Wednesday of the month to find out what it's all about. Sessions are held this academic year on 13th January, 10th February, 9th March, 13th April, 11th May, 8th June and 13th July. It runs from 12.30pm to 2.30pm.

Spare clothes

Can families please remember to check the cloth bags on their child's peg to ensure that there is an adequate supply of spare clothing at all times. Children will get wet or dirty due at some points as they need to access the entire curriculum, or they may just have an 'accident'. Our staff will do their best to monitor when spares are running low but it is ultimately the parent/carer's responsibility. Please speak to your keyperson if you have any questions.

Vitamins

We distribute free vitamins at Ambler for all Islington and Camden children aged under four, pregnant women, mums with babies under one, and those trying to get pregnant. Just ask at the admin office or speak to one of the Outreach team.

Good nutrition in pregnancy and early childhood leads to better health and helps children to grow and develop. Vitamins are essential nutrients that your body needs in small amounts so that it can work properly. It is difficult to get all the nutrients and vitamins you need, even if you eat a healthy balanced diet.



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 **Honorita Lukulay**, Assistant Head, or **Lorna Prynne**, Early Years Foundation Stage Co-ordinator.

Our Advisory Board parents are **Christine Langford** and **Ram Deb. Nadine Mellor**, parent of a Reception child, and **Mary Stevens**, parent of a Toddler child, are 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

AUTUMN TERM

Please note on Friday 18th December we will close at 2pm in line with the primary school. We will provide extended day provision to 6pm as usual for all our working and studying families.

SPRING TERM

DATE	CHILDREN'S CENTRE Nursery (term time only children) & Reception	CHILDREN'S CENTRE Babies, Toddlers, Nursery (all year round – working and studying parents)
Monday 4 th January	CLOSED for INSET day	CLOSED for INSET day
Tuesday 5 th January	OPEN	OPEN
Monday 15 th February to Friday 19 th February	CLOSED for half term	OPEN for Baby Room, Toddler Room, Nursery (working or studying parents) ONLY
Thursday 24 th March	CLOSED for INSET day	CLOSED for INSET day
Friday 25 th March and Monday 28 th March	CLOSED for Easter Bank holidays	CLOSED for Easter Bank holidays
Tuesday 29 th March to Friday 8 th April	CLOSED Easter Holidays/End of term	OPEN for Baby Room, Toddler Room, Nursery (working or studying parents) ONLY

World Book Day – Thursday 3rd March

SUMMER TERM

Monday 11 th April	OPEN	OPEN
Monday 2 nd May	CLOSED for May Day bank holiday	CLOSED for May Day bank holiday
Monday 30 th May	CLOSED for Spring Bank Holiday	CLOSED for Spring Bank Holiday
Tuesday 31 st May to Friday 3 rd June	CLOSED for half term	OPEN for Baby Room, Toddler Room, Nursery (working or studying parents) ONLY
Monday 6 th June	OPEN	OPEN
Thursday 21 st July to Wednesday 7 th September	CLOSES at 2pm for summer break	OPEN for Baby Room, Toddler Room, Nursery (working or studying parents) ONLY
Friday 19 th August to Friday 4 th September inclusive	CLOSED for summer break	CLOSED for summer break
Monday 5 th September and Tuesday 6 th September	CLOSED for Inset days	CLOSED for Inset days