

Dear mums, dads and carers,

March 2018 Newsletter

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Children's Centre Lead appointed and Julia's goodbye

We are all very happy to announce that a permanent Children's Centre Lead has now been appointed and is due to start work at Ambler **next term**. Further details will follow in due course, but we're sure you will join us in thanking Lorna for her continued efforts in helping smooth the transition after Michael Jarrett's departure.

As we hope you're aware by now, Julia Madu, our Early Years Education Worker in Toddler Room, is leaving Ambler to further her studies. We're holding a singing session on **Friday 2nd March** 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 before.

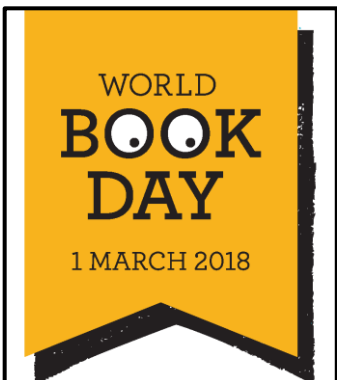


World Book Day being celebrated this week

We are celebrating **World Book Day** on **Thursday 1st 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!

Launching the Extreme Reading Challenge

To follow on from World Book Day, we are launching the '**Extreme Reading Challenge**' to show that your favourite stories can be read anywhere and everywhere! Just think about different, exciting, fun and safe places your child can enjoy a book. Then take a photograph of them reading their book in this 'extreme' place. Bring your picture in to Ambler or email it to childrenscentre@ambler.islington.sch.uk by **Monday 12th March**.



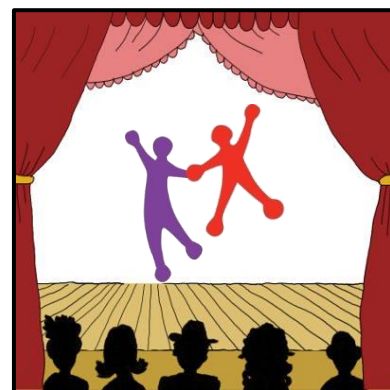
Upcoming performing arts activities for Reception

Please remember that Reception Blue and Green will be going to see *The Singing Mermaid* puppet show on **Tuesday 27th March**. Make sure to return the permission slip and give Lorna, Margaret or Sofia a £3.50 contribution towards the ticket and travel costs. If you are interested in joining the trip, speak to Lorna about any spare parent/carer helper places...

Our Reception classes can also attend 'Movie Night' on

Wednesday 21st March, with an opportunity to wear their comfy pyjamas while watching a family film. This will raise funds

for them to learn more about life cycles by rearing chickens in class! The children will see real life eggs wobble, with cheeping coming from within, just before hatching commences.



Paperwork and documents needed for new financial year

All our families will soon be asked to complete their regular reassessment to prove income levels and/or their address. Please keep an eye out for your **2018/19 council tax bill**, which all families will have to provide, as Islington council are due to start sending them out next week. This is a huge job as it involves all families at the Centre, so please make sure you return all paperwork and documents promptly. Just speak to the admin office if you have any questions as the deadline approaches...



Time running out to sign up for childcare vouchers

The government's childcare vouchers scheme, which allows you to pay for childcare from pre-tax salary, is closing to new entrants on **Thursday 5th April**. After that date, parents who are not already signed up for CCVs will not be able to get them. You must have actually made a salary sacrifice and received the vouchers by the deadline, so you need to tell your employer quickly if you want to join! Parents already using childcare vouchers can continue to do so after this date, as long as the employer continues to offer them. The CCV scheme is closing because the government has introduced Tax-Free Childcare, which gives eligible parents an extra 20% towards childcare costs. It is worth checking out the information portal at <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> to investigate your options.



30 hours reminder for Toddler Room and Nursery 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. We won't be able to offer any families 30 hours childcare without this form being completed. All families who already access the 30 hours childcare in Nursery should also be aware of their 'grace period' end date and make sure they have reconfirmed their eligibility before this date.

A chance to 'Get Involved' with Friends of Ambler

We really want all our families to 'Get Involved' in any way they can, so please let us know if you fancy joining Friends of Ambler in their fundraising efforts over the next couple of months. The parent-led charity is raising money for more arts/music projects, as well as new IT equipment. On Friday 2nd March they've organised '**The Big Great School Clean,**' which takes place from 3.30pm till 3.45pm, then on Friday 23rd March they'll host '**Musical Bingo**' from 7pm till 11pm. Some Friends of Ambler dates for your diary next month include the '**Go Ape Sponsored Challenge**', on Saturday 21st and a '**Gardening Day**' on Sunday 22nd April.



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, or **Selina Laville**, Daycare Manager.

Communication and feedback

Each child has a pigeonhole labelled with his/her name. Please check this daily. 'School Gateway' is used to share information via email, text, online and app. If you have any compliments, complaints or suggestions to help us improve our services, 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 – 2018

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 15th June 2018

Children's Centre and school closed for Inset Day

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 16th August 2018

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



Term dates and holidays

BR = Baby Room, TR = Toddler Room, N = Nursery

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AUTUMN TERM – 2018

Monday 3rd September and Tuesday 4th September 2018

Children's Centre and school closed for Inset Days

Wednesday 5th September 2018

First day of term for all children

Monday 22nd October to Friday 26th October 2018

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

Monday 29th October 2018

Children's Centre and school closed for Inset Day

Friday 21st December 2018

Last day of term for all children

SPRING TERM – 2019

Thursday 3rd January 2019

First day back for AYR children

Monday 7th January 2019

First day of term for TTO children

Monday 18th February to Friday 22nd February 2019

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

Friday 5th April 2019

Last day of term for TTO children

Monday 8th April to Thursday 18th April 2019

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

Friday 19th April and Monday 22nd April 2019

Children's Centre closed for Bank Holidays

SUMMER TERM – 2019

Tuesday 23rd April 2019

First day of term for all children

Monday 6th May and Monday 27th May 2019

Children's Centre closed for Bank Holidays

Tuesday 28th May to Friday 31st May 2019

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

Friday 19th July 2019

Last day of term – school and CC closes at 2pm for TTO places

BR, TR and N open till 4pm for AYR children

Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd July 2019

Children's Centre and school closed for Inset Days

Wednesday 24th July to Thursday 15th August 2019

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