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|  **April 2024 Newsletter**  |
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# Parents/carers reminders

Can parents/carers please bring spare clothes, including socks in everyday **especially** children who are toilet training. Also, ensure babies and toddlers bring appropriate footwear for outdoor play.

Can parents/carers please bring suitable clothing for all weathers especially rain macs, and wellington boots and warm coats.

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**This month we will celebrated our 25th anniversary. Both Sharon and myself wish to thank all the families from the beginning of our nursery journey, to date, and for those yet to enrole, for continully supporting us over the years and allowing First Friends to be your early childhood care and education. We will continue to provide the very best start to your childs future. Thank you to all those who attended the celebrations, I think it is fair to say it was an enjoyable evening for everyone.**

**Parent/Carer notices**

Again we would like to welcome all our new starters, in all our settings. All childern are settling in nicley and seem to be enjoying their time in First Friends. First Friends are an inclusive provision who will care and partner with you as parents in your childs early childhood devlopment and welfare. We can continue to care for your children as they transition into school, by providing your wrap around care of breakfast, afterschool and holiday clubs.

Did you also know that most families can get support for childcare with either universal credits or via paying by voucher, if you enrole at www.childcarechoices.co.uk Here explains how to set up your tax free childcare and save 20% of your costs. In the curent climate this is something that families should not be missing out on!

**Social media**

If you are not already, please make sure you are following us on our social media platforms, @FirstFriendsPDN. We upload photos and activities of events that your children take part in. Please love and share the posts which is great for community awareness and helps to authenticate our page.

Please also would appreciate any parents who would like to leave a review, with regards to your experience, using any of our provisions, on any one of the following platforms:

\* Trust Pilot [First friends Nursery Reviews | Read Customer Service Reviews of firstfriends-nurseries.co.uk (trustpilot.com)](https://uk.trustpilot.com/review/firstfriends-nurseries.co.uk)

\* On Facebook @FirstFriendsPDN

\*Or Google reviews

**All reviews for are placed quarterly into a raffle for “breakfast for 2” at Toby Carvery.**

Curiosity approach and risky play

**For all our new families we are continuing to develop activities based on the curiosity approach.**

The curiosity approach is an initiative to provide the children with authentic play experiences, to do this the nursery has started to allow the children to use and explore adult equipment such as real crockery at mealtimes and in the home corner, we are also exploring real food items during roleplay to try and enhance real life experiences. Whilst doing this we will be teaching our children how to respect their property whilst building on their knowledge that sometimes things can break. By only providing plastic toys we are taking this skill away from our children

**Door code and doorbell at Nursery**

**Please remember not to let anyone in the door as you enter or leave. All registered parents should have the code. Please let the door close behind you so the next person has to enter the code. This does not make you rude but is our policy to keep this system a safe one. If you have forgot the code, ring the bell and a member of staff will let you in. This may take a few mins so please do not think we have not heard the bell but staff may be just dealing with children and will be with you as soon as possible.**

**Invoices and payments**

Could all parents and carers please make management aware if you are not receiving your invoices each month as late payments will incur an additional charge of £10. Please advise us if you have not received your invoice by 24th of the month as all invoices are produced on 20th. This will enable us to get your invoice sent so that you have in in time for payment on 1st.

**Nursey Fee annual Increase.**

You should have now received the statement on our annual increase. We are proud to say that we keep any increases to fees as minimal as possible. Some years we have even held the price without any increase. However as stated in the letter this year’s increase was necessary to ensure the sustainability of the nursery including the quality of care.

Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you are having any difficulties with your fees and we will do our very best to help. Please make sure you are at least paying for your childcare via the tax saving scheme as mentioned above. This will save you take advantage of the childcare tax saving scheme if you are not in receipt of childcare tax credits. This will save you 20% of your costs.

**Appropriate clothing**

Can we ask that all parents provide appropriate clothing for their children, we understand this is difficult as the weather keeps changing so frequently, but it would be appreciated if you could provide your child with a change of clothes to suit all weather conditions and the staff will be happy to change them if necessary. As the warmer weather approaches children may require warmer clothes in the mornings and cooler items for the afternoon. Waterproofs and wellington boots are always a good shout. It is part of our healthy living, happy me and outdoor policy that we explore outdoor play, whatever the weather may be, come rain or shine. Children may frequently get wet during outdoor play so to ensure your child stays warm and comfortable please send a change of clothes so that we can change them and follow the above advice on suitable clothing**. Please ensure you return any items borrowed as we only have a very small amount of spare clothes.**

**Children’s belongings**

Can we ask that you take all your child’s belongings home with you at the end of each session? This will ensure that you are taking any soiled clothes home that need to be washed and will help prevent any belongings becoming miss placed or lost. **It would also be extremely helpful when trying to locate items, if all your child’s clothing is labelled.**

Additionally, can we please ask that your child does not bring their own toys into Nursery (where possible), this can cause conflicts between children, we cannot be held responsible if your child’s toys get broken or become lost.

**Toilet training**

First Friends work extremely hard to work in partnership with parents and strive to keep strategies consistent here, which support those in place at home. For us to provide consistent intimate care for those potty training, children must arrive to every session with an adequate amount of clothes for the individual child. Nursery have a very small amount of spare clothes and children in the early days of potty training can have numerous amounts of accidents whilst adjusting to life in pants at nursery, due to many distractions. It is normal for children to take longer to grasp the concept at nursery than at home and it can also be normal for some children to take several weeks, so we ask for your patience during this time. First Friend’s staff regret having to call parents but in some extreme cases this has been needed as we physically cannot provide them with something to wear due to shortages. In order to avoid this, can all parents/carers please make sure that their children have more than enough clothes to see them through each day. Staff will communicate with parents as to whether a child needs more or less items. Can you please ensure you also provide baby wipes for those more difficult soiled accidents as I’m sure you can imagine how difficult it is to ensure a child does not get sore and cleaning a child with cotton wool and water can be time consuming and not effective. If your child is potty training, please ensure all soiled clothes are taken daily to be washed.

Useful links for potty training are as follows.

[www.eric.org.uk](http://www.eric.org.uk)[www.pampers.co.uk](http://www.pampers.co.uk)

[www.pottytraining.co.uk/8\_signs](http://www.pottytraining.co.uk/8_signs)

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| **Dates for your diary****(Nursery)****March 22nd** **First Friends Birthday party Celebrations****7pm**  |

[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/potty-training-tips.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/potty-training-tips.aspx)

**Nappies and wipes**

If your child is still in nappies, please ensure your child arrives to every session with an enough nappies and wipes. Please write your child’s name on the wipes. In the case of an emergency, we do have some spares, however these can run very low. It has been brought to our attention that there has been lots of occasions where children are needing to be changed more than once a session and children are having to use spare nappies as a regular occurrence. I’m sure you can appreciate that if we do this every day for several children then the cost of this will break into the budget which should be used for resources. If your child has had to use a spare nappy, please ensure you replace it the following day. To prevent costs creeping up we will be left with no choice but to invoice parents for nappies used if the problem continues. Parents will be charged.

**Collection times at Nursery**

Can I please remind parents how important it is that you do not arrive before your session time? Even a few minutes can cause a busy change over where each child may not have a handover they require. Similarly arriving late to collect your child can have an impact on our ratios and equally staff will be unable to give sufficient feedback of your child’s session. . If you arrive early to a session, you will be asked to wait as this can also cause numbers and ratios to overlap.

Parents arriving later than their finishing time will incur a late arrival charge, which is currently £20 per every 15mins or part thereof.

**Extended 30-hour funding entitlement for Nursery**

**Funding for 2yr old and babies**

Whilst we still have a few places available for funded places the hourly rate that the government allocate has not yet been clarified. Funded childcare is not “FREE” and you will be required to pay for all consumables which are part of a child’s day in nursery. In simple terms resources, food, activities, heating, lighting, etc. is not accounted for in the funding and in order to maintain the environment and remain a sustainable provision with staff continuously training to meet the ever changing needs of children and families a charge to cover this is necessary.

[www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) Please check your eligibility if you are unsure.

If you are eligible, please ensure the office has your code, NI number and D.O.B at the earliest convenience as Derby City Council will be giving a deadline each term.

Once parents have registered then it is your responsibility to update your details via the portal every 3 months to ensure you are still eligible. If you miss this deadline then you will have to re-register from scratch and funding will be stopped until your claim has been reinstated.



**Ladybirds** **Butterflies**

**What we have been learning**

**All of the children are currently enjoying activities which are associated with the season “Spring”. Children in both rooms are learning new songs and rhymes which support this topic. Crafts and activities to support learning. A trip to the farm will extend the learning of the children in Butterflies and give them some hands on learning experience and opportunity to learn new language.**

**Please don’t forget if you have any pictures of home learning, days out, fun snaps you have taken then feel free to upload them to your child’s learning journal. Your children will be experiencing many learning opportunities with you as parents and this can play an important part of their development profile if we have this information available.**

If you would like more information on this type of communication and how it will support your child, please speak to a member of staff. Resources can be downloaded from [www.sparklebox.co.uk](http://www.sparklebox.co.uk).

**Nursery’s home library information**

**A selection of books are available to choose from and take home to share with your child. We ask that you return and swap books weekly so that everyone has a varied choice.**

**Polite reminder:** please remember if somebody different is collecting your child you must inform a member of staff prior to the collection, if we do not have a password set up for this, we are unable to let your child go home with this person, this is for safeguarding reasons.

**Famly APP**

**The Famly app is where you receive your invoices and you can update your personal details when you need to. We can also send group and individual messages direct and is a quick and effective communication platform. You can mark your child as sick or on holiday if you will not be attending a session. Please make sure you have this app and are staying in touch with all the day to day updates that we send over from the office. Messages through you children’s learning journal app will be more able your child’s room activities and their care. Please make sure you regally check both platforms for updates.**

**FB and the website will also hold similar updates and information but will be on a more generic and marketing basis for the wider community knowledge.**

Out of school clubs

Easter Holiday club. With Easter just a couple of weeks away, we are excited and looking forward to the activity plan for the holiday club. There are still a few sessions available to book, including spaces on trips.

Thank you all for your continued support

We hope to see many of you at our party celebration on 22nd

Tracey