



Newsletter for Jan, Feb & March 2024



Thinking about

“How we want the world to be”

focusing on:

- ❖ Talking about our emotions
- ❖ Using the language of feelings
- ❖ Developing our self-esteem
- ❖ Feeling confident
- ❖ Having a growing sense of self awareness
- ❖ Taking risks, having a go, joining in

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Find us on Facebook too: Croft Playgroup, Swindon

Happy Christmas & New Year! We look forward to welcoming everyone back and hope that you are all able to enjoy the festive period and some time with loved ones. We are also looking forward to welcoming our new families and children and supporting them as they settle.

Values focus Our values underpin the ongoing work that we do and we adapt to the needs and interests of the children, but each term our circle time sessions do have a particular focus. This term we will support the children in naming feelings, developing their self-awareness, self-esteem and confidence.

It is important to create a loving atmosphere which enables us to support the children to self-regulate and develop understanding of their feelings. Young children do not have the brain capacity to regulate their own emotions in response to the needs of others. The ability to think in this way, sometimes referred to as 'theory of mind' develops gradually as they reach the age of around 7, though all children develop slightly differently. It is vital, therefore, that our expectations are reasonable.

As with adults, many things can lead children to feel emotionally drained (feeling tired, hungry, stressed by changes to routine, excitement, transition, grief etc) and it can be useful to consider the concept of everyone having an 'emotional cup' which, when full, results in a happy and content child but which, when empty, results in a child who may seem withdrawn, sad or who might demonstrate distress or attachment seeking behaviour (e.g. behaviour which will engage adult's attention and interaction, whether positive or negative).

We will continue to consider each child's self-esteem, how they like to be comforted and how to help them manage their emotions so that they can feel content and able to engage in play (i.e. have a full emotional cup!). To help them feel valued and emotionally recharged children may need different interactions with adults (both at home and at playgroup) for example:

- more one to one time to play;
- comforting touch through cuddles or snuggling to look at books;
- hearing more words of affirmation and encouragement e.g. 'I like the way you kept trying, I saw that you were kind to...';
- being helped and supported a little more; or
- knowing that we are thinking of them even when we're not together (a note in a lunch box for example).

As children mature, their inner sense of self-worth should give them the confidence to manage themselves with greater independence. In the Early Years arguably our most important job is to empower children with the knowledge that they are loveable and valued in the wider world.

We may suggest a home visit where we feel it might be a further boost to your child's well-being in the setting. If you feel it would be useful please feel welcome to suggest it.

Staffing update – a sad goodbye

Dear Ghossiya, who has been a valued member of our team since 2017, has taken the decision to leave playgroup. She will be taking the time to support her family. Ghossiya has been a wonderful key worker and colleague and will be greatly missed. She has been a brilliantly creative and loving member of staff; we will miss her wonderful baking, the work that she did to support children with creative projects and her lovely circle time sessions. We wish her well and will keep in touch with her as she moves into a new phase. Her last day will be February

Events and visitors It is important that we seek to provide a variety of enriching experiences for the children, so in the terms ahead we have various things in the pipeline which include those listed below:

- A visit from **Dinky Ponies** on Monday 15th Jan.
- **Preschool science sessions** every Thursday morning for each room.
- **A Sponsored reading event** to promote sharing stories and to raise funds for playgroup.
- **World Book Day (Thursday 7th March)** is a wonderful chance for us to celebrate books and reading. ***We celebrate all week*** and children are welcome to bring in a favourite book and to dress up as their favourite story book character if they wish (it's not compulsory).
- **Visits from people who help us.** If you are willing to come in to talk to the children about your work and how it helps others, please let us know: doctors, nurses, dentists, paramedics, police officers, firefighters, builders, delivery drivers, supermarket staff, and other professions we may not have thought of, are all welcome. Let us know if you would be prepared to come to talk to the children.

Celebrations We love to learn about celebrations which are unique to the families at playgroup. Please remember to let us know if there are celebrations coming up that you take part in as a family and whether you'd be happy to come in to help us learn about them.

Winter weather and Snow closures

Please remember to send the children in warm clothing and appropriate footwear to cope with mud, rain, ice and snow! ***And remember to name everything.*** In the event of heavy snow, which might affect the safety of the building or the ability of staff and families to travel safely, we will inform you of closure at the earliest opportunity. We always do our best to stay open.

Food in lunchboxes

The children often have healthy and well-balanced food choices in their lunch boxes and it's always lovely to see what they enjoy eating. If you'd like a copy of our Health Eating leaflet with additional tips and ideas, do let us know. We also have a booklet with some lovely recipe ideas from playgroup parents, which we are happy to share. We'll leave some copies of both leaflets in the foyer. If you have any good ideas for healthy bakes or meals for children to let us know.

As always if there is anything you would like to talk more about please feel welcome to make contact in the usual ways.

Dates for Terms 3 and 4...

Every Thurs to Feb half term only	Preschool Science	Hour long sessions in each room.
Wed 10 th Jan & Thurs 14 th March	Show and Tell	Children in on that day can bring in something to show or tell us about something special.
Thurs 11 th Jan & Friday 8 th March	Bring a family member to preschool day	10am to 11am and 1:30pm to 2:30pm <i>Please email to let us know if you would like to come in to play.</i>
Wed 24 th Jan & Wed 13 th March	Committee Meeting	6pm at playgroup <i>All parents and carers welcome to attend.</i>
Wednesday 31 st Jan	Fundraising cake sale	11:45am and 2:45pm
Weeks beg. 5 th Feb & 19 th Feb	Parent's Reading Week	11:45 and 2:45pm <i>Please email to let us know if you would like to come in to read a story at the above times on any day during the week.</i>
Mon 12 th to Fri 16 th Feb	Half term	<i>Playgroup is closed all week</i>
Week beg. Mon 19 th Feb	Term Starts	
Week beg. 4 th March	We celebrate World Book Day all week	<i>All week optional fancy dress as your favourite story book character, bring in your favourite book to share.</i>
Tuesday 5 th March	Dinky Ponies <i>Time to be confirmed.</i>	<i>A visit from the little ponies who like to have their manes brushed and decorated.</i>
Wed 6 th & Thurs 7 th Mar	A visit to Bert's Books <i>Dates to be confirmed.</i>	9:30am <i>An opportunity to listen to a story and choose a new book with our World Book day vouchers.</i>
Week beg. 11 th March	Parent's Information Week	An opportunity to meet with your child's keyworker and review their play and learning. <i>More details to follow.</i>
Week beg. Mon 18 th March	Significant female adult stay and play week	10am until 11am and 1pm until 2pm <i>Important female family members (Mums, Grannies, Aunties, Godmothers etc) are welcome to come in to spend time at playgroup.</i>
Week beg. 25 th March	Easter fun week	Easter activities for the children during their usual sessions.
Wed 27 th March	<i>**Last day of term**</i>	Finish at normal time
Thurs 28 th March	Staff training	Playgroup closed.