



## May 2020 Newsletter

I hope you are all keeping safe and well during this extremely challenging time. We are missing the children and our nursery family very much and really looking forward to the nursery re-opening fully as soon as we are able to do so safely.

Thank you so much for the wonderful messages of support we have received from parents; I can't tell you how much we appreciate your patience and understanding in the current circumstances. I am very aware how challenging it is for you all, trying to juggle your workloads with home schooling and entertaining the children, while also trying to keep your families safe. Please do let us know what further support we can offer you and what help would work the most effectively while we are closed. Please follow the link later in the newsletter to complete a short survey:

We have also attached a really useful resource tool for parents with ideas for home schooling 0-5 year olds.

### ZOOM CALLS AND COMMUNICATION:

I hope the weekly planning has been useful, and the lovely zoom calls have been a welcome break for you. It has been wonderful for the staff to see the children and I hope the children have enjoyed it too. Their I.C.T skills have certainly improved during the last few weeks!

Zooming with the Chicks has been amazing! It has been wonderful watching and following their little journeys with Jess at home.

The Zooms gave a great insight into the life cycle from egg to chick. Using updates through Instagram and Facebook too have ensured that families not using Zoom have also been able to see daily updates.

The Zoom's were not only great for communication regarding the chicks but the children were able to ask questions, chat to their friends and key worker and a great opportunity for the Mummies & Daddies to chat too!

The Chicks spent 10 days growing and were a great distraction from the real world for the children. We will miss you; Captain America, Spider Man, Rey, Hans, Chick almighty Chase, Poppy, Feathers and Ariell!!

Staff have also continued to Zoom with the children in their rooms and have loved seeing the children's and parents smiley faces. From singing songs, story times and 'show and tell'.



The Zoom calls have given the children a sense of 'normality' and seeing their friends makes them feel as ease and can give them a little reassurance that their friends are also not at Nursery



The interaction via Instagram, Facebook and Eylog has been exceptional! We really enjoy seeing all the planning and activity suggestions being carried out at home. Not only does it keep the children occupied, when uploaded from home we can maintain progress and mark the observations against the Early Years Curriculum. I am so pleased to see so many families getting involved!





## STAFF NEWS

All staff with the exception of Jess, Linda and myself, are currently furloughed under the job retention scheme.

They have been absolutely amazing in volunteering to participate in Zoom calls and continue sending planning through the period of closure.

All the nursery staff will take a week of annual leave next week from 11th - 15th May and therefore we will be unable to deliver planning or Zoom calls next week.

Jess is happy to still Zoom with the children, if there is a request for it- please message her using the EYlog

## FAMILY NEWS

We are delighted to announce that two nursery families have welcomed new babies into the world over the last few weeks.

Congratulations to Jack Abrahams and family for the arrival of baby brother George!

Congratulations to Jessica Dunbar for the safe arrival of baby sister Harriet!

We have had lots of pregnancy announcements too so cannot wait second generation Day Care children over the next few months!

## NURESERY FEES

Thank you for your co-operation and support in continuing to pay the **10% retention fee** during the period of closure. We are continuing to pay staff 100% of their wages and have many ongoing overheads, and your support will help ensure we survive the crisis and can re-open as quickly as possible.

The planned fee increase for April 2020 was postponed until September 2020.

I can now confirm that there will be no fee increase at all in 2020 and existing prices will be held until 2021.



## Nursery re-opening

★★ We plan to re-open the nursery for the children of Key Workers from Monday 18th May. We had hoped to re-open earlier but there are several considerations that the school have had to make to enable our re-opening within their school site.

If you are a designated key worker, and intend to resume your place, please contact Jess ASAP. We will need to take staff off furlough to facilitate the ratio requirements and therefore planning the numbers of children who will be attending is very important. Nursery fees will go back to the full fees when your child resumes their place.

We will follow government guidance about when it is safe to open the nursery fully and keep customers updated. ★★



## SAFETY MEASURES FOR COVID-19

We take our responsibilities extremely seriously to keep staff, children, and families safe. Measures will be in place to minimise the risk of infection from Covid-19 and are fully documented in our Risk Assessment and Coronavirus Policy attached to this newsletter. This situation is new to all of us, and if you would like to discuss the measures or suggest additional improvements we can make, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.



Please expect it to take a little longer to drop your children off in the mornings as we will require parents to queue outside maintaining 2 metre distance, and we will bring children into the nursery one at a time. Children will be greeted at the door and have their temperature checked on arrival before entering the nursery. Parents will be asked to remain outside.

Parents are also asked to be very conscientious about keeping children off nursery if they have any symptoms such as a high temperature, stomach upset, or cough, and to inform nursery as soon as possible.

Staff in early years settings are not required to wear PPE except during intimate care such as nappy changing. We will have a stock of PPE for staff if they choose to wear it. Staff will have their temperature checked every morning and will be required to complete a self-declaration of health before returning to work. Staff will be asked to maintain social distancing and wash their hands frequently.

Parents should be aware that if a staff member tests positive for Covid-19, we will have to instruct all other members of the team who have been in contact with them to self-isolate. Although we have additional temporary staff available to cover such incidences, it might affect the ability of the nursery to remain open at times.

It is extremely difficult to maintain social distancing in young children, and whilst we will do all we can to maintain social distancing, parents should be aware that bringing your child back to nursery will increase their potential exposure.





## NEW NURSERY OPENING:

I am delighted to confirm that the plans to move Day Care at Saint Martin's to the current sixth form centre are still continuing, and the move should take place during August 2020.

It has been extremely challenging getting contractors agreed, and timescales are still moveable! Once we are able to confirm the start date of the contractors, I plan to hold two Parents Information Meetings via Zoom to show you the plans for the site and answer any questions you might have. These will be scheduled for June 2020 and dates and access links will be sent out in the next few weeks.



## Pre-School Graduation:

The pre-school graduation ceremony is one of the highlights of the year as we are so proud of the pre-school children and what they have achieved during their time with us. We are really hoping to be able to hold our annual pre-school graduation party in July.

Clearly this will depend on government safety guidelines, but if we are unable to hold the graduation, we will instead send our nursery graduates out a cap and gown so that they can dress up and dial in to a zoom graduation ceremony! It would be lovely to see pictures of the children in their graduation gowns.

We will also order and send out a disk of their learning journey as a precious keepsake of their time with us.

## Summer Garden Party

The Summer Garden Party is a lovely, social event for parents, children and staff to get together. Clearly we are unable to plan anything until we receive clearer government guidelines, although I suspect the garden party might be postponed until 2021!





## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The Department for Education's [Hungry Little Minds](#) campaign features tips and practical activities that parents can do at home with children to support their early learning. There are many simple ways to help children learn and it does not have to feel like 'learning'. Having everyday conversations, make-believe play and reading together all make a big difference to children's development. There are also some lovely ideas on the [BBC's Tiny Happy People](#).



## SURVEY



We would really value your input to our short survey. Please follow the link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Y26KFHG>

We also now registered with 'TRUSTist' and would really welcome your reviews. If you would like to; please follow the link to leave a testimony - Thank You

<https://trustist.org/DayCareAtStMartinsSolihullReviews>

If you would like to discuss any aspect of your child's care, please do get in touch as follows:

**Sarah Beattie; Nursery Director:**

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**Jess Dolan; Nursery Manager:**

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**Linda Yorke-Biggs; Accounts Manager:**

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**Tel: 0121 711 2557**

**Our new website is:**

[www.daycarestmartins.co.uk](http://www.daycarestmartins.co.uk)