

Stowey Bears Newsletter

December 2022



We Wish you all a Merry Christmas & a Happy
New Year

We hope you all have a great Christmas break, and wish you all our children and families a happy new year.

At the end of the term we will sadly be saying goodbye to Keely who is leaving to concentrate on her family, she will be greatly missed by all. Therefore I (Rachel) will be stepping into the manager role and I am extremely excited to take on this amazing opportunity.

Next term we will be slipping back into our familiar routines, working with one another, generating ideas, planning activities and games to help your children grow mentally, emotionally and physically.

We would like to express our gratitude to the parent volunteers' that help us through the year both on the committee and non committee parents, your time is and has always been invaluable to us, and we look forward to working with you in the new year.

This term we will be looking forward to exploring family and togetherness as the spring term slowly approaches. We have planned coffee mornings and different events so please keep an eye out for dates in the near future

Lastly we would like to say thank you to all our families for being part of our preschool community. As usual we love to share the many talents of our preschoolers, so please send us photos/achievements of your children, and we will discuss this during our circle group times.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to email or speak to a member of the team

Many Thanks

Rachel & The Stowey Bears team xx



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ALL ITEMS NEED TO BE NAMED, INCLUDING RUCKSACKS, we sometimes cannot identify a child's bag when looking for a change of clothes especially if they get knocked off their pegs.

NAPPIES – we kindly ask that if your child is still in nappies that you send them to preschool with nappies **NOT pullups**.

Slippers and Wellies
Could all children have a named pair of slippers and wellies that can be left in preschool at all times, this way we are prepared for going outside in all weathers and also slippers keep our room all nice and children feel relaxed inside with slippers on.

Family Photo
Those who have not yet supplied a family photo could you please, this is for our family board and helps children settle and talk about home and people who are important to them

Session Timings

Morning 8.50 – 11.50am
(12.20pm with lunch)
Afternoon 12.20 – 3.20pm
(bring at 11.50 if having
lunch)

You will need to supply
your child
with a packed lunch or
order lunches
directly at the school

Dropping off and collecting your children

- Please remember to **wait outside** when dropping off or collecting your children from preschool, a member of staff will meet you at the door
- If you want to talk to a member of staff please wait until all children have been brought in/collected, we will then see if the member of staff is available or organise a meeting
- **DO NOT enter** the school through the wooden gates at the end of the day until the small black gate has been opened.
- Even if the big black gates are open please do not drive in through them
- Please **be on time to collect your child** at the end of a session, staff have a limited time to clean and prepare the room for the next day before they have to collect their own children, please refresh yourself with our late collection policy and the fact that late collection charges may be applied

TERM DATES

16th December Break Up for Christmas holidays

Return to preschool Tuesday 3rd January

10th February break up for half term

Return to preschool 20th February

31st March Break up for Easter Holidays

Return to preschool 17th April



Topics and special dates this term

4th – 13th Jan – Families/Togetherness

16th – 27th Jan – Bird watch & Wildlife

30th Jan – 6th Feb – National story telling week

6th – 10th Feb – Children's mental health week



Dates for Diary

Thursday 2nd February - Proposed Visit to steart Marshes – to coincide with world wetlands day TBC

22nd January – Chinese new Year, the year of the Rabbit



10th February – Parent Coffee Morning
more details to follow



Changes to Staffing/Staff roles

Keely- As you are aware Keely is leaving us at the end of this term, she will be sadly missed by all, and we wish her well and hope she enjoys her time with her family, and we hope to see her in and around preschool in the future

Rachel – She will become the new manager for the setting, She is very excited and enthusiastic for this role and I'm sure she will rise to the challenge, she has lots of ideas and practices to put in place on our return in January

Sarah – She remains as Deputy and will work alongside Rachel, they have a great working relationship and I'm sure they will work well as a team. She is also our designated safeguarding officer

Hayley – Will remain as a keyworker, she has great enthusiasm and the children love her, she is also our SENDco which means she works with families and agencies to get children extra support if needed

Emily – Emily is a new member of staff who will be starting in January, she recently did her Level 2 in childcare and wants to do a level 3, she will start as a play worker and work alongside keyworkers to learn to become one, she had a great rapport with the children and will be an asset to the team

Tina –office based, supporting the manager, working on all the admin that comes with running the preschool, billing, wages, paying bills etc, she is always available via email if you have an admin enquiry

Training days

10th November – Outdoor Learning Training, through learning through landscapes



The team at stowey bears undertook an outdoor learning training session. Playing outdoors allows children to develop self confidence, independence and self esteem. Children also become aware of limits, boundaries and challenges in their play, and it opens up new activities, experiences and opportunities.

The team worked together to express new ideas, looked around our garden from a child's point of view and discussed what we would like our vision to be in the garden in the future.

It was a fantastic and beneficial training session.

16th November – Paediatric First Aid

The EYFS has a statutory requirement that 1 member of staff should be trained in paediatric first aid, We believe that its good practice that all members of staff are trained. We did this training as a whole Group. It's a 12 hour course 6 hours online learning followed by an exam and then 6 hours face to face Training, which covers, CPR, bleeding, Choking, burns & scalds, allergies (including Epipen or equivalent Use), shock and lots more. This was done on a practical level using dummies and each other to practice.

There are many free online courses for parents to brush up on first aid skills <https://www.firstaidforfree.com/free-online-first-aid-courses/>

Other Training undertaken this term

Sarah has completed her child protection/safeguarding update training

Rachel, Sarah and Keely have done their Fire marshall training

Toys from Home

We have noticed a big rise in toys being bought into our setting from home, please can we STOP, we have a variety of toys available for the children to play with here.

When toys get bought in we end up with a few different scenarios, they can cause conflict and sharing issues, a child may not want to share their special toys but we emphasise sharing at preschool, a child may share with another child then suddenly want it back

At the end of the day the toy cannot always be found, it could be in a number of places, and can be very hard to find, and this can cause heartache and a challenging home time for all

Help with Fees and Funding available for your child

When your child starts preschool, we will ask for a copy of their birth certificate and you need to fill out a child registration form, we send an electronic copy to county so funding will be paid as soon as a child qualifies. Funding is split into three terms, Autumn 1st September – 31st December, Spring 1st January – 31st March and Summer 1st April – 31st August. You can only get funding the term after the term their birthday falls

2-year-old funding. There are certain qualifying criteria which can be found on their website, you can apply through this and will get a letter to confirm when payments will start. We will need this letter either emailed to us or given a copy.

[Funding for 2 year olds \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk)

Universal 15-hour funding this is available for every child the term after they turn 3. They can split this and use at more than one setting as long as they are not exceeding the 15 hours. There is nothing a parent has to do to get this, but we do need to know if hours are claimed at another setting. You will be asked to sign a form termly which shows how many hours we claim for your child. More information at [Early years entitlement \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk)

30 Hours Funding This is the 15 hours universal and an extra 15 hours on top specifically designed to help working parents, again certain criteria apply. You also have to apply the term your child turns 3 to access it the term after, if you apply late you will have to wait another term. We will need your code and national insurance number to put into our portal to claim it. The codes also expire after so long and you will get an email to recheck it, this is the parents' responsibility, we cannot claim for expired codes and fees may have to be charged if that happens. [30 hours extended entitlement \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk)

Pupil Premium. If you are in receipt of certain benefits or meet certain criteria you may be able to apply for pupil premium. This is a small payment that is made to the preschool per hour that your child attends. We use pupil premium payments to benefit the children who we get it for, it may be to purchase specific resources to aid their learning, training or staff hours to help your child. Pupil premium can be carried over in to school once awarded. [Early years pupil premium information for parents \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk)

Tax Free Childcare Tax-free childcare is an online payment scheme that benefits working parents, it is topped up by the government. For every £8 a parent puts in the government puts in £2, up to £2000 a year. This is a good scheme for working parents and can be extended until a child is 12, or 17 if disabled and can be used to help pay for after school clubs. More information is at [Tax-Free Childcare - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

A NOTE FROM OUR COMMITTEE

Hello!

What a busy term it's been for the committee!

We've been busy fundraising with the 'Where are the Spooky Bears' and the Christmas Market. Thank you to everyone who did the hunt and bought from the stall. We can't wait to reinvest the money back into the preschool's resources. We're planning lots of fun ideas for next term, if anyone would like to get involved with the fundraising side of committee life then please get in contact! We are always looking for extra hands.

On behalf of all the committee we are very sad to see Keely leave the preschool, but with a young family now is her time to be with them. We are however thrilled to see one of our existing teachers rise to the challenge, with Rachel as our new manager we are excited to see her expand the preschools outdoor learning and community involvement.

We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Warmest wishes from the Stowey Bears Committee xx



Useful contacts

Parent/General enquiries stoweybearspreschool@outlook.com

Committee stoweybearscommittee@hotmail.com

Finance stoweybearsfinance@gmail.com

Telephone 01278734636

Preschool mobile 07544744918 (we take this on our outings if you need us while we are around the village)

Sarah sarah.stoweybearspreschool@outlook.com

Rachel rachelyellowkeystoweybears1@outlook.com

Hayley hayleystoweybearspreschool@outlook.com

Tina tinastoweybears@outlook.com

