

The New Croft Club

Newnham Croft Primary School, Chedworth Street,

CAMBRIDGE CB3 9JF

NEWSLETTER: March 2018

Dear Parents,



Snow in March courtesy of the so called 'Beast from the east' provided opportunity for snow play like we haven't seen in years! We dug out the sledges, donned our coats and gloves and went out to embrace it. The children really maximized opportunities for exploratory play moulding it, mark making on it, even painting it with squirty bottles filled with food colouring which led on to creating coloured crystals as the snow turned to ice overnight.

As these photos show there was also lots of fun to be had with traditional pursuits of snowmen building, snowball fights and downhill sledging.



Parent's and Children's survey 2017/2018: Thank you for your response to our parents survey which we ran alongside our children's survey last term. We have already addressed issues raised in the **children's survey** through a series of snack time meetings held over the course of a week to allow full child participation. We are now confident that all the children clearly understand that they can tell staff about anything worrying them, and that they are reassured that they will be listened to and that we will act upon these concerns in line with our club policies and procedures and involve parents and the school if and when necessary.

As was the case with our previous survey, the children said that what they like least about the club are the toilets, especially the little toilet off the main room. Happily I can report that these will be getting some attention over the Easter Holidays which should improve the 'user experience'. In the meantime staff maintain our regular cleanliness checks throughout the session and children are reminded of their responsibilities towards keeping them flushed and clean.

Also as before, the children said they enjoy playing in the big Playground the most, especially the Go karts and den building. Our Arts and Crafts activities remain popular too. The children felt the snacks had improved since last year although since introducing a suggestion box we have been asked for 'locally sourced honey from an organic farmer' which we regret is outside our budget! However we thoroughly approve of the eco- aware thinking behind this request!

Parents, your survey informed us that we are doing a decent job on the whole and I have been particularly pleased to see that you rate highly the way we respond to questions and concerns that you may have.

Since analysing the results of the survey we have thought long and hard about venturing into the world of Facebook and decided against it (for now anyway)

However exciting news is that a generous donation from a parent means that we can afford to **revamp our website**. We have spent a lot of time researching other sites and noting what we liked about them as well as heeding your requests for more published information about childcare vouchers, holiday club schedules, online booking and possibly paying as well. We are now at the preliminary stages of design and although this is new territory for us, we will try and deliver an informative and user friendly site which will be regularly updated. Please bear with us in the meantime and feel free to email me to ask for any information which is not on the present site as we are in this transition stage. I'll let you know as soon as the new site is up and running.

We did not get many responses to our **holiday club questionnaires** understandably perhaps because it wasn't holiday club when the survey was conducted. We have therefore decided to keep them on display during our holiday clubs for parents and children to fill in whenever they wish. Of the feedback we did receive however, it is clear that our strong points are the freedom that the children have to input their ideas about what they want to do and the fun relaxed social atmosphere centred around friends and 'General play' We are looking at ideas for adding more seasonal activities, themed days or even themed weeks in the future so if you have any ideas please let us know!

Staff news: Long term we are still looking for a suitably qualified Playworker to fill the position of Deputy Manager. However Rocky has agreed to be Acting Deputy for the time being as recruitment is proving challenging. This is not a reflection on us but a common concern throughout the childcare sector and especially in Playwork which is hampered by a perception that it is 'not a real job' and also by the limited hours we are able to offer on a regular basis.

At the New Croft Club however, we passionately believe that Playwork is very much a real job and staff undergo regular training to increase their proficiency. I was really lucky myself recently to have the chance to attend an inspiring workshop on the PARS model of playwork. PARS playwork practice is very pro-child and takes the perspective of the experiences and concerns of childhood as its focus. This means that us adults need to observe carefully, listen well and reflect often about how we should behave in the children's play space so that we do not step in and spoil (adulterate) all the wonderful social, emotional and developmental benefits that children gain through playing freely to their own agenda as they explore their world and broaden their experience and abilities including through what is termed 'risky play'. I gained so much from this course and couldn't wait to tell the rest of the staff about it and share the associated playwork techniques and theories with them. We have already had some fantastic sessions where we have done things differently in what is termed a 'neophilic spike' (new experience) which livens things up and 'keeps it fresh' for the children and staff alike!

(Post)Easter Holiday Club: We will be open from the 3rd April until the 13th April. Thank you to those parents who have already booked, we still have spaces available on all dates so please get in touch as soon as possible if you would like to make a booking.

Resources: Thank you to parents who regularly think of us when they are having a clear out. We have a seemingly insatiable appetite for any crafty bits and bobs! At the moment we are in need of tracksuit type trousers so if any of your children are outgrowing theirs we would be grateful.

Changed your address or phone numbers recently? Please remember to inform us about any changes so that we can update our child folders. This applies to changes in existing medical conditions, allergies and food intolerances also.

Thank you for reading this newsletter. If you have any comments or questions, please don't hesitate to contact us either by catching our attention at the end of a session or by any of the following ways:

- Leave us a message in the message book in the school office
- Phone/text us on mobile no. 07812798195
- email Maureen at thenewcroftclub@gmail.com
- Telephone 01223 311437 during club hours.

Warm regards,

Maureen