

The New Croft Club

Newnham Croft Primary School, Chedworth Street,

CAMBRIDGE CB3 9JF

NEWSLETTER: January 2016

Dear Parents,

Best wishes to everyone for a happy and healthy 2016.

After a mild first half, winter is now turning colder and the children long for snow. Will they get their wish this year? While we all wait to see, the dark evenings are perfect for lightsaber play especially as Star Wars is back in fashion. This has the added advantage of helping staff to see everyone in the big playground more easily as well so we are all enjoying the craze!



Feedback from Afterschool club parents' survey and children's Questionnaire: Thank you to everyone who participated in our November 2015 survey. We are always keen to hear from you about how we can adjust and improve our service and build upon those aspects of it which you tell us we are getting right.

The survey reveals our strengths to be our 'caring and helpful' staff; mixed age groups playing together; child led free play opportunities after the structure of the school day and variety of play opportunities both indoors and outside.

Some respondents flagged up issues which are really the flipside to the 'free play' coin. One issue is the inconvenience of waiting for a child to finish a project at collection time - Please rest assured that we are always able to keep your child's project for them to finish off at their next session. Often children come to an activity late because they maybe spent the first half of the afternoon outside or they only became inspired to try the activity when they saw a finished product or how much fun it looked to do. This is why most of our most popular activities tend to carry on over several days (like the sock snowmen!)

Child led play also means that sometimes children go through phases of playing a certain game/ wearing a particular dressing up outfit/ choosing the same toy out of the cupboard for quite some time as they explore fully all the possibilities it offers. Staff can and do offer alternatives and suggest ways to extend the play but we don't 'rotate' or ration toys. Children are encouraged to ask for whatever they feel they need for their play and it is our job as play workers to enable this wherever feasible.

Space remains an issue especially during the winter months. We have made some small adjustments such as an extra bin for book bag overflow and greater tidiness in this area. We have also moved the craft tables further into the room to allow for greater floor space for play, den building etc.

At Holiday club some extra things come out of sheds and cupboards like swings and ladders, board games, indoor playhouse and pool table etc. This is in an attempt to diversify activities offered so that for children who attend both after school and during the holidays the atmosphere feels different in some ways. We are also able to do things like the wonderful afternoon play and campfire session held in the wildlife area just before Christmas as the group is smaller and we have more time. This survey was primarily about after school club but please parents, if you have any particular ideas about how we can diversify our activities during Holiday club do get in touch, I would love to hear from you!

Response to the children's questionnaire was close to 100%. They gave top marks to choice of activities; staff; big playground; friends; arts and crafts and snacks. Their comments mostly wanted more of whatever it is that they particularly like. For them it is the toilets that get the thumbs down. We do what we can - They are checked at intervals throughout the afternoon and children are reminded to flush and wash hands. We will keep on doing this forever I guess... Some younger children also fear the boisterous nature of the bigger children as they worry they will get hurt inadvertently. This is a common and understandable concern of theirs as the bigger children do seem

so BIG! Usually they soon come to realise that the bigger kids mean them no harm and are in fact quite funny but as ever, if you have any concerns please let us know immediately.

Lost Property: Name tags on everything are a really good idea too especially in this season of 'layering up'. We have one bin for lost property and it fills up fast. About once a week we go through it and give back to children their things if they are named and the rest of the clothes we put in the school lost property. Unnamed lunch boxes and bottles have to be thrown away for hygiene reasons.

Resources needed: We need tracksuit bottoms and leggings if you have any which your children have outgrown. Please return these items if they are used by your child as we hardly have any and it when accidents happen we need to be dealing with them as fast and efficiently as possible. I have scoured the charity shops but children's clothes are obviously extremely popular! Other bits and bobs we are always grateful for are buttons, ribbons, old Christmas cards, wool, shoeboxes, old CDs etc. All these things are fantastic for crafts. Thank you to those parents who have donated things to us recently, the light-up toy samples, library books, materials and egg boxes – we will use them all.

School and Holiday Club Dates 2016: I am taking bookings for half term (February 15th – 19th) and Easter (March 29th – April 11th) Holiday clubs now. Early bookings are appreciated, please remember you are able to cancel a booking up to two weeks before the day being cancelled without incurring a charge.

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

School Term Dates 2016

Spring term 2016 1 st half	Tues 5 th Jan – Fri 12 th Feb
2 nd half	Mon 22 nd Feb – Thurs 24 th March
Summer term 2016 1 st half	Tues 12 th April – Fri 27 th May
2 nd half	Tues 7 th June – Thurs 21 st July

Holiday Club Dates 2016

Spring half term 2016	Mon 15 th – Fri 19 th Feb
Easter Holiday 2016	Tues 29 th March – Mon 11 th April
Summer Half term 2016	Tues 31 st May – Mon 6 th June
Summer Holiday 2016	Fri 22 nd July – Fri 2 nd Sept