

The Newcroft Club

Newnham Croft Primary School, Chedworth Street,

CAMBRIDGE CB3 9JF

NEWSLETTER: April 2021



thenewcroftclub.co.uk

Dear Parents,

It is great to be up and running again for both afterschool and holiday clubs. We look ahead this Spring with renewed optimism that we will gradually see the safe lifting of the Covid restrictions we have all had to work with this past year. The children have coped remarkably well with the system of 'bubbles' we have imposed on them but these restrictions have meant that sadly not all children could be in the same bubble as friends and classmates due to the fact that our bubbles grouped siblings together and not year groups. I spent days at the end of each term break looking at ways to let every child be with their friends, but the task always proved impossible within such confines. We are all really looking forward to the day when we can all be one big bubble again!

There will be some good memories that we take forward with us however, and for us as playworkers, it has been marvellous to witness children's innate need to play no matter what is happening in the world. We have been amazed at the resilience that the children have shown. We had to remove and /or severely restrict use of all toys and resources yet there has been an outpouring of creative play ideas throughout this past year. Every inch of the big playground has been combed for 'treasures' – I was proudly shown a part of an old eating fork that a child had dug up last week and was keeping safe in their pocket, as well as a cache of teeny quartz 'diamonds' carefully collected over days. We have seen stones being ground down into different coloured 'spices', long leaves being skilfully woven and plaited, natural den building in the hedgerow and 101 uses for sticks!

There are new games being invented too. We have been able to keep out a limited choice of loose parts which the bubbles have had access to when it was their week's turn in the outside yard area. It has been a joy to witness all the different ways that the children have found to use these items! Loose parts are often chosen over conventional toys because of the many and varied 'Affordances' for play that they offer: The photos below illustrate but one example of how children play with items in a completely different manner than that for which the items were designed.



As Tama writes: 'In lockdown we didn't have much to do but we used skipping ropes and floor mats to make a Jack-in-the-box'. Nina then takes up the story: 'During lockdown we weren't allowed to get all of the toys out at once, so we decided to create a 'human Jack-in-the-Box'. We had seen other children had made a den using floor mats and watching them poking their heads out gave us the idea. We adapted the den, which was already a box shape, and dangled a skipping-rope from it to make a lever. We took it in turns to get inside the box, whilst our friend pulled the skipping rope so that we knew it was the right time to leap up out of the box. It was fun pretending to be the Jack-in-the-Box waiting for the skipping rope to be pulled and jumping out, and it was fun being the person outside pulling the skipping rope and seeing their friend suddenly appear.'

Post lockdown child contact details check: Do we still hold the correct contact details for you? We are aware that working patterns may have changed and concerned that the contact numbers we hold for reaching you during the day may no longer be valid. Please ask to check your child's registration form and update it if necessary, so that we are able to reach you quickly if we need to. Has anything else on the form changed such as your address, new or existing medical conditions, allergies and food intolerances? It is important that you let us know please.

Afterschool club September 2021: Our waiting lists for September are as long as ever with the new Reception intake having also joined the queue now. We are currently close to our maximum number of 42 on most days despite the bubble restrictions so we do not foresee very many spaces becoming available if we only account for Y6 leavers. Please help us to help other families in their planning by letting us know if your child will no longer need their space from September. The school does not share this sort of information with us so please advise us separately. We hope to finalise the registers for next year by mid July.

Holiday club:

Thank you to everyone who attended our Easter holiday club. It worked really well with the 2 bubbles and if the bubbles restrictions are still in place, we will only operate 2 bubbles again during this half-term which means that spaces will be limited. Half term will be running from Tuesday 1st June to Monday 7th June, and we are presently taking bookings for this as well as the long summer holidays.

Summer club changes: Regarding the Summer holidays, we intend to make some changes. These changes will initially run for 2021 and 2022 after which we will reassess the viability of the idea and consider any feedback that we receive from you. Our intention is to close completely during the traditionally quieter weeks mid- August so that staff who work all year round in afterschool and holiday clubs can plan for and enjoy an annual break at this time. This year, 2021, we will close only for the one week of the 9th-13th August (as it is quite short notice). However, from next year 2022 we will close for 2 weeks (dates to be decided). Please let me know if you have opinions about these changes.

Early bookings for Holiday clubs are very much appreciated as it helps our planning provision. We would therefore like to remind you about the 2-week cancellation period. If your plans change and you wish to cancel a holiday club space, you may do so up to 2 weeks before attendance without incurring charges. Similarly, if we find that we have such low bookings that it is not viable for us to open, we can also give you 2 weeks' notice that we will not be able to open and obviously you will not be charged. Luckily, so far this has only ever happened on 2 single days in our history.

Thank you for reading this newsletter. Please remember that all our recent newsletters can be found on our website along with other useful information about registration and booking, school term and holiday club dates and other useful stuff! If you have any comments or questions, or if you wish to discuss any issues then 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:

- Phone/text us on mobile no. 07812798195
- email Maureen at thenewcroftclub@gmail.com
- email Maureen via the contact form on our website www.thenewcroftclub.co.uk

Warm regards and stay safe,

Maureen