

January Newsletter

Issue 5



WELCOME

New year and new start! We would like to welcome all of our lovely students back to school, hope everyone had a great Christmas holiday, and enjoyed spending time with all your friends and family!

We are delighted to announce that our afternoon class started back on 23rd January in both our Dublin 8 and Dublin 15 centers. So a big warm welcome to our new friends!

We also have some eager new staff members who have joined us! Let's give a warm welcome to CongYue D8



and Stacey and Sinead in D15.

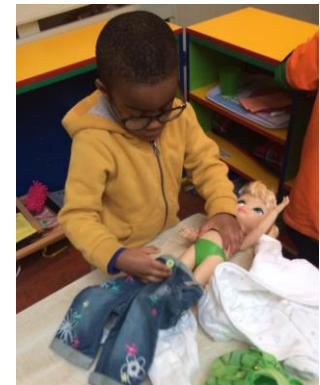


We would also like to take this opportunity to say a congratulations to Andreana who has joined the management team in Inchicore as our new Assistant Head Teacher, and Lauren who has taken over from Aisling as our Head Teacher.

We are looking forward to seeing the faces of all our children back with us to see what excitement 2017 has in store!

MONTHLY CURRICULUM, THEMES AND LESSON PLANS

In January our students have all been very creative and explorative using our themes for this month of Settling In, Fire Safety, Our World (natural environment and Solar System), and Recycling.



We are now engaged in creating a junk art town for our children. Using recycled materials, we are making a different part of the town each week. Last week Fortlawn started with a police station, with D8 jumping on board this week with the creation of the school! This will allow the children to experience the value of being apart of creating a large integrative masterpiece and seeing how little bits of hard work can contribute to something greater!

If you have any material that cold benefit this project, please send in your recycled material with your child. Thank you!



Montessori:

Practical life skills for this month include dressing frames; rolling and unrolling mats; environmental care, and disposing of litter. Sensorial skills include smelling bottles; geometric solids; constructive triangles and using a nature table!

For Maths the children have been learning to sort by shape, size and colour, as well as using our geometric shape cabinet! The letters for this month are C and K.



January Activities

Going out in the community:

D8 have started back with our "Walk in the Community" with a trip to the post office with our Bluebells class to post a Thank You card to all the great football

coaches we had last term. They were great with all our little ones and it was remarkable to see the growing confidence in the children through the football training! The walk was a great experience to all our students, even though some of them were tired on our way back to school.



Swimming:

We are so proud of our little swimmers this term, it is amazing how many of the skills they remembered, how patiently they can wait for their turn in the water and how independent they are becoming while practising their dressing skills in the changing room! But let's here it from their perspective:

"This morning we sang about the Five Little Ducks, afterwards our teachers showed us a picture of a little boy in water, just like me! Then they helped us move our arms around just like the little boy. It must be our swimming day!

The place we go is big and smells different. The sounds are louder and have an echo. There

are lots of distractions like big frog bins and machines with sweets in them. I used to get upset walking by these, but now I walk nicely. My teachers remind me that it's time for swimming and I remember how excited I am to get into the water.

I'm so proud of myself. I show my teacher how I can lift my arms high into the air and pull my orange tshirt over my head. Sometimes my head gets stuck, but I know my teacher will help if I need her. I like to show her that I don't always need her though. She reminds me to pull down my trousers and holds my hands to help me step out of them. When she says "tidy up" I find my special swimming bag and help her tidy all my clothes away neatly! Waiting for all the children to be ready is sometimes hard. I used to get very upset and cry, but now when I'm told to wait I understand that the water will come eventually and I know I will have fun.

The pool is very big and scary. I sit on the side of the wall and we sing humpty dumpty, then we make a big splash into the water! I love the feeling of floating in the water, I didn't know my body could do this! My teacher helps me sway from side to side, kick, and splash! But my favourite part of the day is moving to the Hokey Kokey and Wheels on the Bus! "

I'm tired when we have to get dry and I'm sad that the water is finished. I've learned in

school though that it's okay when fun things are finished and I know my teacher will give me lots of praise and high fives if I walk nicely to the changing room.

Swimming is a weird day, but I've learned that it's a big world and that I can make my teachers so proud of me if I try help do things for myself, just like they've shown me in school!

DSPCA:

We were so so excited to have the Dublin Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals visit our school! I think it took all the teachers, as well as the students, by surprise to see the giant snails they brought with them! The children were a lot braver than the teachers when it came to getting up close and personal with these animals! We were pleasantly surprised to see how engaged and curious the children were by the snails!



Out and About: Helpful Tips

Within this new section of the newsletter, we will try to pass on any helpful or interesting information which may be of use to your friends and family.

Shopping:

Recently a Supervalu in Palmerstown introduced an evening aimed at parents shopping with kids with autism. Every Wednesday between 7pm and 10pm they turn off all music and announcements and even dim the lights. Fingers crossed this will catch on and we will see it happening in even more Dublin stores!

Clothes:

Dunnes Stores online are launching a new range exclusively designed for children ages 3-14 with special needs. The range offers seamfree clothes with snap button closures and soft designs for those with sensitive eyes.

Public toilets:

Did you know that you can purchase a Radar Key that will let you into any public disabled toilet? This is super handy if you

need a bathroom with extra space and privacy – especially if your child is uncomfortable sharing public a bathroom.

Dublin Airport:

Planning a trip away? Contact Dublin Airport and give them a heads up. If you explain to them that your child has autism they will help your transition through the airport. They can give you an 'important flyer' pass meaning you wont have to queue. The Dublin Airport website also provides visual aids with a social story to help prepare your child for what to the expect, as well as pictures for their PECS book. Read here for more info

<https://www.dublinairport.com/at-the-airport/passenger-information/special-assistance/autism-asd>

Holidays:

Need a break? There are plenty of options out there if your looking for a family getaway with your child.

www.spectrumbreaks.co.uk

offers a self catered family holiday on the Isle of Wight. The accommodation and facilities are adapted for children with all different needs including Autism.

Can you help us?

If you been to any restaurants , shops, or events which have catered well for your needs, please let us know and we can try pass the information on within our next newsletter!