

NEWSLETTER – April 2020



CHANGES FOR THE DIARY

Tuesday 21st April - Craft night - **CANCELLED**

Saturday 16th May - Fairy Hunt - **CANCELLED**

Tuesday 19th May - Craft night - **CANCELLED**

Tuesday 16th June - Craft night - **TBC**

TBA - Church Fete

Tuesday 14th July - Craft night - **TBC**

CONTACT DETAILS

Please keep us up to date with new telephone numbers. If you need to add or change any contact details, please email stcatharinesunderfives@live.co.uk

WELCOME



We have really enjoyed seeing all the activities you have been engaged in with your families on Facebook, messenger and email whilst we have been closed. Please do keep sending them in and let us know if you are happy for us to share them. Although these times are extraordinary, there are some really unique learning opportunities that will enable our children to be confident, capable and self-sufficient in the future. Watch your child for a few minutes each day and you will recognise new skills they did not have the day before! Children are extraordinary learners and you are amazing in enabling their learning.

A few activities you could try are:

1. There is no rush to get dressed and be out of the house at the moment so allow children the time to dress independently, a real skill that will put them in a great position when they start school (I promise the teachers will love you for it!).
2. If children do not regularly use a knife and fork, then allow them supervised time to practise the skills with playdough, it has enough resistance to develop muscle control, but not so much that they will struggle to cut it. Encourage children to place their 'pointy finger' at the point where the handle meets the fork or blade and wrap the rest of the fingers and thumb around the handle. Encourage a gentle sawing action rather than just pushing down to cut. This again will enable children to be independent when they become eligible for the universal free school meals in reception year.
3. Take time to read with your children. Discuss the front cover 'What do you think this book is about?' use your finger to underline the words so that the children learn that words are read from left to write, and from the top of the page to the bottom. If you read the same book regularly, encourage them to remember what might happen next. You can also ask them what could have happened differently? You are building up their memory skills, recall, imagination, love of books and stories, skills for conversation, but most importantly you are allowing them to learn and use new words every day. This has been proven to improve children's long-term academic success and really is one of the greatest gifts you can give to your child.
4. While we remain lucky with the weather, encourage children to build dens in the garden using anything you can find! Children will benefit from building muscles as they reach, pull, tug or throw sheets over chairs, tables, washing lines etc. They are also developing problem solving skills, resilience if things don't go right at first, assessing their creation and developing it further to make improvements, and the true prize here, a real sense of achievement when they are able to climb inside and play or enjoy a picnic!

Tasks such as these will really boost children's self-esteem and help them to gain a sense of identity.

When we return to playgroup we will be easing the children back in, hopefully (weather permitting) we will have lots of outdoor play as I imagine most children will be enjoying time in their gardens currently. We will also be preparing for the sad farewell of our pre-schoolers. We are still aiming to enjoy the full range of leavers activities and celebrations, but we are also busy preparing alternative options in case they are needed. Please be assured that we will find an appropriate way to celebrate the time our amazing pre-schoolers have been with us, even if that means working within social distancing measures to achieve it. Our creative hats are on!

To keep in touch, you can find us on Facebook and follow the posts for ideas of activities to do with your children: www.facebook.com/StCatharinesUnder5s

PRESCHOOL CHILDREN AND PRIMARY SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENT

By now all our preschool children should have received news of the primary schools that they will be moving onto in September 2020 and many of you have shared the exciting news with us. We hope that you have all received your first choices and if you have not yet let us know, we would love to hear from you. Please email stcatharinesunderfives@live.co.uk and share your news. St Catharine's Under Fives have the children's transfer records ready to be completed and will be making arrangements of how to get them to you should we not reopen at playgroup before they are required to be submitted to the schools.

PARENT FEES

St Catharine's Under Fives playgroup sadly closed their doors on Friday 20th March 2020 until further notice, due to the Coronavirus, and we have been following the news and government guidelines very closely to try and establish a date that we may be able to safely return to playgroup again.

For those parents who pay fees, you will be aware that you have paid for two weeks that the children were unfortunately unable to attend for. We thank you for paying your fees promptly as always, as this helps us to keep the playgroup operating. In these unusual circumstances and as a thank you to our parents, we would like to inform you that we are currently holding your fees for when we reopen. Should we reopen before the summer holidays, the 2 weeks of fees from before the Easter Holidays will be deducted from the invoices for the new term. Should we not open until after the Summer holidays, we will be in contact to ask whether you wish to have a refund or would like to donate your remaining fees to the playgroup and we will sort in accordance with your wishes.

PARENT ROTA

When we return to playgroup after lockdown there will be plenty of jobs to be done to get us up and running as quickly and safely as possible. If you have ever wondered what goes on at playgroup and would like to help us get back into a normal routine as soon as possible when we reopen, please email stcatharinesunderfives@live.co.uk and will contact you as soon as we have an opening date to place you on the rota to come and help for a couple of hours, providing the government guidance allows us.

COMMITTEE

Do you know that we are a committee run playgroup and what this involves? Do you know how we plan our events or fundraise? This is all vital to keep us running. Everyone is welcome to join the committee. If you are looking for something to keep you busy during in lockdown, the committee could be the ideal group to join to start planning activities for when we open. You can get in contact by email at stcatharinesunderfives@live.co.uk



Whilst Stay & Play are not currently open, you can follow ideas for activities and keep in contact by joining our Facebook page. We would love to hear from you and what you have been up to. Our Stay and Play Facebook page can be found at:

 www.facebook.com/Stayandplayatstcaths

Have you been doing a lot of online shopping since being at home? Why not join easyfundraising.org.uk and help St Catharine's Under Fives do some fundraising whilst we are in lockdown.

It cost nothing and donates money to St Catharine's every time you shop online through easyfundraising.org.uk.

A big thank you to all the parents/carers who have been doing this for us whilst we have been closed.

Thank you so much to all those parents/carers that have already supported us by signing up to the Gloucester lottery. We receive the names of those supporting so thank you; even the staff are signed up and supporting the fundraising on top of the amazing work they do daily with our little ones. If you haven't already but are interested, please take a look and remember you could be in with a chance to win yourself.

Please help support St Catharine's Under Fives

easyfundraising
.org.uk



is as easy as 1,2,3 and a great way to raise money for St. Catharine's Under Fives just by shopping online:

1. Go to easyfundraising.org.uk and Click 'Create an account' or 'Support a good cause'
2. Choose Cause Name: **St Catharine's Under Fives – Gloucester** and Click 'Support this cause'
3. Create an account with your email and a password to start shopping

A percentage of the shopping total will be donated to St Catharine's Under Fives. We thank you for your support.

Gloucester Lottery

supporting St Catharine's Under Fives

WIN UP TO £25,000

Play Gloucester Lottery and Support our Cause!

- Join the rest of the community and make where we live even better
- Win prizes of up to £25,000 EVERY WEEK!
- Choose St Catharine's Under Fives when you sign up and we get 50% of every ticket!
- At least 80% goes to good causes in the local area
- Tickets only cost £1 per week and it only takes a minute to join

To start supporting, visit:
www.gloucesterlottery.co.uk
and search for: St Catharines

Supporters must be 18 years of age or older

CHICKEN POX

Whilst we may not be at playgroup, we have had a report that there are a high number of cases of chicken pox around. We would just like to pass on this information for any parent/carers who maybe pregnant and to keep in mind should your child develop a rash.

CAN YOU HELP

If you have been having a clear out whilst being stuck at home, please keep St Catharine's in mind for anything that could use a new home. We have been on the lookout for any cot blankets or sheets that you no longer need or a Gazebo, craft items. If you are able to donate any of these, please email stcatharinesunderfives@live.co.uk and we will arrange a hand over for when we open again.

ST CATHARINE'S UNDER FIVES PLAYGROUP SESSIONS

If you know anyone looking for childcare once playgroup is allowed to open again, St Catharine's Under Fives Playgroup are able to be contacted for any queries, questions or bookings. Please ask people to email stcatharinesunderfives@live.co.uk We are happy to help.

IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT US....

Please try the playgroup mobile number first – 07432 073325 – during playgroup hours.

For all admissions, finance and admin queries, please phone TINA on 07870874592

Check out our webpage at:

<http://stcatharinesunderfives.org.uk/>

Check out our page:

facebook.

www.facebook.com/StCatharinesUnder5s

