

Headteacher Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

Its been an eventful last few weeks of 2019 in St Pauls Nursery Schools with visits, parties, saying goodbye to staff leaving to have their babies, and welcoming new staff and apprentices onto our team!

Our team have coped with a lots of staff illness — in fact I don't think I can ever remember a time when we have had so many staff off sick. The staff who have remained standing have coped remarkably well to not just keep the place going—but to still offer the personal support for children and families. I so admire their commitment to getting it right for children, whatever the challenges.

Politically its been eventful too, both locally and nationally. Bristol LA have made changes to their Early Year's Leadership model and will now be reviewing the sustainability challenge for our Nursery Schools. Another Local Authority priority will also be driving forward a complete remodel and refocus on the provision in the city for children with Special Educational Needs.

Nationally we have no idea yet what changes this government will make to Early Years, but we hope they listen to the facts that nurseries are closing all over the country due to the gap between funding and the real cost of delivering great nursery education and high quality daycare. For those of you who have not supported the *petition* to 'Save Nursery Schools', you can find the link at : <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/save-nursery-schools-now>

We would like to call on your help, time and/or expertise to support us in few other ways:

MINI BUS DRIVING: Do you, or anyone else you know have a regular time each week, or alternative week, when you might like to drive our Mini bus on outings with small number of children and staff ? In return we can get you trained and qualified as a Mini Bus driver! One of the things that the staff love to do with your children is to get them out and about—it inspires their talk, thinking, connecting and leadership... but we need extra help now to make this happen. Please contact Eva in the office if you are interested or email us here: stpaulsncc@bristol-schools.uk

FOOD PROJECT: We will be working with the Soil Association to develop a food project next year—this will include not only cooking food but planting, food exploration and healthy living. If this is a passion of yours and you would like to contribute please let us know!

GOVERNORS: Both Eleanor Dalziel and Susannah Harlow have volunteered to be Parent Governors, which is fantastic news! I know they will be introducing themselves to you in the new year. We still have Governor Vacancies—if you are still considering the role, just come and have a chat with me and I can put you in touch with other governors to find out more. We are particularly wanting Governor representation for all our community groups.

PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP and ENGAGEMENT:

In January we will be asking you for your preferred way to receive communication from us—we realise that as we move away from hard copies of newsletters etc. not everyone knows about everything! We also need to know the best way in which we can share our thinking and hear about your thoughts about aspects of the Early Years Curriculum, for example: early reading, maths, behaviour, disposition for learning etc.—so that we can work together with you and your child to make the biggest difference to their resilience and learning.

No parents attended the recent evening 'Meet to Head and Information Session' this term—so we need to make sure we are offering what you feel you might need!

Finally I would just like to say **THANK YOU** for choosing St Pauls for your child. We work really hard to keep improving on our previous best here and responding to the needs and concerns of our families, we know we don't always get things right, but we learn from our mistakes and move on. I hope that this year you have had better experiences with place allocation, invoices etc and that you can see the investment we are putting into 'refreshing' our provision for birth to 3s.

St Pauls is a remarkable place— so much goes on here as it's a Centre of Excellence for the whole of the South West of England and the Hub for Central Bristol Children Centre. We offer innovative learning experiences for children, families and staff teams which is informed by the most current research and thinking; we invest in emotional well being as our priority and we offer support for the whole family as well as the child. It is also a setting that is full of remarkable leaders and practitioners, I am grateful each day for their commitment, bold thinking and work ethic. Please join me in thanking them for going the extra mile in all they do.

I wish you all a peaceful, safe, healthy and happy break and look forward to all that 2020 will bring !

Family Support

It has been another busy term for the team at Central Bristol Children's Centre. We have been meeting new families and supporting our existing families across central Bristol. We have really enjoyed our new group on a Friday at the Trinity Centre, we get to go outside and explore the gardens...why don't you come and join us? Also we have developed a new partnership with Easton Family Centre and we now run a group every Wednesday morning in partnership with them. We are really enjoying getting to know this community and they are enjoying singing and story time in lots of different languages, it's a really welcoming group... why don't you come along and try it out?

We have had to take a break in delivering our groups at St Phillips whilst they address some building works, but we look forward to relaunching in the New Year. In the meantime we are continuing to offer a weekly drop in for our families who attend Rosemary Nursery School and The Limes. Groups at Bannerman Road Children's Centre continue to be busy and local families are enjoying playing with 'loose parts' and developing their imaginations.

If you would like to find out more about different groups... please check out our :

- ◆ St Pauls Nursery website : <http://stpaulschildrenscentre.co.uk/>
- ◆ Visit our Facebook page : <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsnurserybristol/> or
- ◆ Pick up a leaflet from reception

We look forward to welcoming you.

Important dates

DAYCARE DATES

(baby room and 2-3's room)

- * Last day before Christmas break - *Monday 23rd December*
- * First day back - *Thursday 2nd January*
- * INSET day - *Thursday 6th February* (nursery will be *CLOSED* for all children)

NURSERY APPLICATION

If your child was born between **1st January 2017 and 31st August 2017** you need to apply for nursery space by filling in the form available at the reception.

NURSERY SCHOOL DATES

- * Last day of term 2 - *Friday 20th December*
- * First day back (beginning of term 3) - *Monday 6th January*
- * **Final date to submit school applications - *Wednesday 15th January***
- * INSET day - *Thursday 6th February* (nursery will be *CLOSED* for all children)

SCHOOL APPLICATION

If your child was born between **1st September 2015 and 31st August 2016** you need to apply for a *new reception school place* to your home local authority. You can apply online for a reception place by following the link :

- ◆ <https://parent.bristol.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/parents/admissions>
- ◆ Or simply google : "*Bristol city council school admission*" and click on the first link.

Early Years 1&2

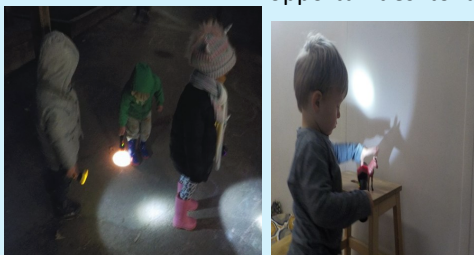
The **Baby Room** team have been exploring what creativity means for babies. We started with the idea that it is very sensory and introduced a range of resources to support this, e.g. sensory bottles, bags with strong smells and scents, real vegetables in the home corner, scarves and ribbons and more opportunities to move, dance and make music.

We have also offered more **painting activities**. In the beginning some of the children were a bit unsure and their encounters with it were brief. We found that if we offered it again and again they became more confident, using their hands, sponges, brushes, pots etc. to move the paint around. They also explored it at different levels and on different surfaces.

In January we will be welcoming Shab to our team as an apprentice and Ikram who is a level 3 Childcare student who will be with us on Mondays and Thursdays.



In **Early Years Two**, the Soundwaves project continues to be a great success and as a team we have noticed children's growing confidence to express themselves musically. Musical collaborations between children and practitioners can be seen, or should I say heard everywhere. In the block area children sing as they busily work together to create large structures. At meal times when cutting their food, children and practitioners are exploring pulse and beat – "Chop, chop, choppity chop!" Outside, there are endless opportunities to use large movements in time with vocal sounds - stomping, jumping and dancing.



As the nights have drawn in we have also been enjoying exploring light and dark, using torches to make shadows of both ourselves and other objects. This is a great opportunity for the children to be able to see things differently and that discover that they can have an impact on the world around them. It's also really fun!

On another note, we would also like to say good luck to Nicky who will be going on maternity leave and a big hello and welcome to Lauren who is working the other half of the week to Henar, and our new apprentice, Amy.

Nursery School

Bristol Old Vic Theatre have been working with us for three years and this year we will be travelling down on Friday 20th December to see "Boing!". Nursery children and families have been working with Jess and Katie as they perform, explore props and develop storytelling together. We have been visiting the theatre too, exploring the rehearsal space right at the top of the Bristol Old Vic, performing ourselves using all the props (especially the loooooong rope used for highwire!) and even gone on the stage to take a bow! Children have made wonderful links in their learning, performing at home to parents, representing what they have learnt and leading group times with their own theatrical plays! Here is Namiyah walking carefully along the tight rope!



We are currently researching how **drawing and mark-making** supports children's early writing skills. Louise and Lydia are helping the Nursery Team develop our think-

ing and practice around graphics, drawing, mark making and writing. We are inspired by the work of Kim Scott who recently did some training here at St. Paul's and are exploring ideas of visual memory, absorption and managing distractions as key skills that support children's writing.

Nursery children have been making huge, bold, intricate, detailed marks in the Studio! They are full of texture, colour and shape. Some children have been wallowing in the experience drawing long, long lines or making bold blocks of colour. Some children have been talking about what they are drawing, spending long periods of time representing their families, rockets, cars, horses and even characters from Frozen!



Local Activities

Kids Craft Club



St Pauls Library

12.00 – 13.00 every other Saturday of the month
From 16th November

FREE

Book a place at 0117 914 5489 or
libraries.volunteering@bristol.gov.uk
Ages 4+

Bristol Libraries

UWE
BRISTOL University of the
West of England



PARENTING GYM - FREE COURSE



We will be hosting another **parenting Gym** at St Barnabas from 30th January. The course will last for six weeks, each session is packed with practical tips and techniques to make family life easier and help your children thrive.

If anyone is interested please speak to either Sammy or Gaynor on 0117 9030337. Spaces are limited. Admission is free.

Sessions will be running on :
Thursday afternoons 1:15-3:15 pm

At : St Barnabas Church of England VC Primary School

Everyone is welcome to come to a **taster session** : *Thursday 30th January 1:15-2:00 pm.*

Booking is essential.

Barton Hill Settlement Children's Centre has received funds to create a Mini Library.

Their new furniture and new cushions create a forest like environment where families can enjoy a one to one time with their little ones or a group story time. All families are welcome to come and browse their new selection of books anytime during the open hours : Monday—Thursday 9:30-3pm or

come to one of the droppings :

Monday 9.30-11.30am /Tuesday 1-3pm/Thursday 9.30-11.30am
Wednesday 1-3pm (for babies 0-18 months only)



Nursery news corner and Reminders

FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS

◆ 2-3's room & baby room

Friday 20th December

Time : 1:30 - 3:30

◆ Nursery school

Tuesday 17th December or Thursday 19th December

Time: 1:30 - 2:30

Please bring food to share and join us in festive celebration.

On behalf of all team members we would love to wish all our families peaceful and happy break.