

# Mews News

## **I N C R E A S E I N F E E S**

The following changes to fees were agreed at the Management Committee meeting on Tuesday 13 th February. They are due to take effect from week beginning 2 April 2001.

### **18 Months to Under 3 years**

Morning or Afternoon session	
	£13.75
Additional Hour (includes Lunch)	£ 5.35
5 sessions + per week, session rate	£13.00
Weekly per session rate	£11.85

### **3 Years & Over**

Morning or Afternoon session	
	£13.00
Additional Hour (includes Lunch)	£ 5.35
5 sessions + per week, session rate	£12.50
Weekly per session rate	£10.85

### **Pre School & Term Time Only Sessions**

Morning Session (ex. lunch, over 3)	£13.50
Morning Session (ex. lunch, under 3)	£14.00
5 sessions per week	£12.50
Additional Hour (includes Lunch)	£ 5.35

### **Holiday Club**

Two or more sessions a week per session	£16.00
Weekly rate (five sessions) per session	£14.85

### **After School Club**

Two or more sessions a week £6.50 per session	
Weekly rate (five sessions) per session	£6.00

We have tried to keep to our usual criteria of keeping the fees lower for those who use the facilities most. The main change this year is to try to narrow the gap between the fees of the under two and the children who are three years and over. Originally the rationale for the higher fees was the fact that the ratio of staff to children is higher and therefore more costly. The introduction of the pre school Learning Initiatives the resources requirements are increasing for the three/four year old year olds and like most nurseries we are finding that parents are understandably taking their children out earlier so most of the government funding is going to primary schools.

There is a marked improvement the Holiday Club's financial position. While there is some cross subsidy from the After School Club (filled to overflowing!) we hope that the increase in the session fees will resolve the situation entirely for next year. The main problem is the under-capacity on Friday's and Rachel tells me some Thursdays. Apparently we are oversubscribed Mondays and Tuesdays. So parent if you don't mind changing a Monday for a Friday you will help to keep the costs down. We plan to 'market' the clubs more this year.

#### **Where your money goes.**

**New Staff:** Most of you will be aware that we have a welcome addition to the Pre-school staff. Rosie tells me that the children are able to use the computers every day now that **Sally Bond** has joined the team. It has been decided to engage another nursery assistant sometime after July to ensure continuity during the staff holiday period.

**Improved Staff Salaries:** As you would agree our staff deserves an annual cost of living increase, which is proposed at 3% from 1 April. The Management Committee Review group recommended that we ask the Salvation Army Finance Board to agree an improved salary scale for nursery nurses and to allow us to consolidate the increases given to co-ordinators on an established and published scale. The changes have been endorsed but have yet to be agreed. I will keep you posted.

**Increase in resources:** We have increased the budget for the following; - Toys & equipment, staff training and inset days.

### Staffing Review

The Review group reported back to the main committee. Briefly the results were as follows:

- Rotas review required further input from staff as it was difficult to see how changes could be made.
- There was an apparent overstaffing at lunch times and an imbalance in agreed planning times between the nursery, pre school and play clubs.
- Unless staff were willing to increase the lunch time break by 15 minute the timetabling of a 36-hour week would have to stay.
- No conclusions were reached as to whether a change of structure would add value to the service we offered. While there were some problems of communication between the two locations there was no reason to suppose that a more an overall manager would be preferable to the joint co-ordinator arrangement.
- It was agreed to increase the staffing by one nursery assistant/nursery nurse full time and one term time part time member of staff for the Pre School.

### OTHER CHANGES

**The Management Committee** approved the proposal that we offer the post of nursery co-ordinator to Helen Wilkinson who holds the position temporarily until April. Sally Bond would be asked to continue in the term time only post in the pre- school. It was agreed that the circumstances this time were exceptional and we confirmed it was our intention to advertise all posts externally in the future.

- **Next Meeting of the Management Committee to be held Wednesday 25 April at 7 pm in the Conference Room.**

### REFURBISHMENT OF THE MEWS

Phil and Mike (Southside) will start decorating the nursery starting Monday 19 March. They planned the venture with the nursery staff and it seems possible that we can use two rooms while one room is closed. The more difficult parts will be decorated evenings/weekends.

**The Play Club** side will be decorated during the Easter break and the plan is for the children to meet as usual and then be ferried to the Salvation Army's Young people centre (Green Park near Sainsbury's) on the days when visits away are not possible. The facilities are very good and spacious.

We are looking for exciting new bright floor coverings and equipment to replace our now TEN-YEAR-old stock.

### Nursery's 10 th Birthday Party

A celebration for ten successful years is being planned for early May when we will be all newly clothed in our refurbished rooms. *Watch this space for more information*

### What's Happening?

Events to give readers a flavour of what's happening or is about to happen in the nursery and play clubs.

Ruth and Rachel have attended courses on child protection and First Aid. Helen has been investigating special needs aspects of nursery provision. The result of which is Ruth has taken on the responsibility of Child Protection across the Mews and Helen is our SENCO (Special Needs Co-ordinator)

Helen and Sally E. are attending a BANES course on Play and Risk Assessment on the 21 March.

Sally tells me she is planning a Saturday Inset day for staff so that all the information and the implications for introducing measures into the Mews will be explored.

**Pre-School News:** For the children in the pre-school the current theme is **Toys**. The children are *actively* involved with puppets, moving toys, dolls, toys from around the world and teddy bears. So Olivia Crook's garden has been the venue for a teddy bears picnic and all the toys enjoyed their own tea party with biscuits made by the children.

**Play Club News** We are already now for the Half Term Holiday Club. There are just a few vacancies on Thursday and Friday. Don't forget to book for our Easter Holiday Club. Details of an exciting programme will be available next week.

*Hand in your requirements for the September After School Club Now.* It may seem early but we are anticipating being oversubscribed. The sooner places are allocated the better. Those whom we have to disappoint will then be able to make alternative arrangements. There is already a waiting list!