

Playgroup News

September 2025

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We welcome the new children and families that have started with us this Term. Your child's keyworker is available to see you at the beginning or at the end of the session if there is anything you wish to discuss regarding your child or children.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE LINKS IN THIS NEWLETTER WILL EITHER NEED TO BE TYPED IN OR COPY AND PASTED FROM THE OUR WEBSITE OR EMAILED COPY

New Term

We are delighted to welcome Nikki as the new manager at St John's Baker Street. This term, we have also welcomed new children to St John's, and they have been settling in wonderfully. The children have enjoyed exploring the outdoor area and developing their physical skills through activities such as running, jumping, and climbing. Over the coming weeks, we are excited to introduce a variety of creative activities to spark their imagination and support their learning.

From September 2025, the government has updated the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the framework that guides nurseries and early years settings in supporting children's learning, developing, and welfare. At St John's, we are already following this new guidance to ensure children continue to learn and thrive in a safe and nurturing environment. These changes simply build on the strong foundations we already have in place, enhancing the high-quality care, play, and learning experiences we provide everyday. At St John's, we believe that the best outcomes for children happen when we work closely together with parents and carers. You know your child best, and by sharing information, ideas, and feedback, we can provide the most supportive and enjoyable learning journey. We value regular communication, whether that's a quick chat at drop off and pick up, sharing updates through learning journeys, or inviting you to join in with activities and events. Together, we can celebrate your child's achievements, support their development, and make nursery a happy, nurturing place for them to thrive.

Internet Safety

We cannot overstress the importance of keeping your children safe on the internet. It is often easy for them to access unsuitable content if you don't have parental control set up.

Chicken Clicking is a good book to start talking to your child. This link is useful:
<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/0-5/>

Keeping fit

Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership in conjunction with Hertfordshire have launched *Herts Mini Movers* in a bid to suggest ideas for playgroups and help families and settings to encourage more movement every day to reduce the number of young children who are overweight or obese as this will affect their health for the rest of their lives. Some lovely ideas can be found via this website: <https://sportinherts.org.uk/herts-mini-movers>.

'Research indicates that children between ages 2-5 should achieve 180 minutes (3 hours) of physical activity daily, with 60 minutes of that time being high activity/intense physical activity'

Walking to playgroup, using the buggy less can all count towards the 180 minutes. The children at playgroup spend most of their time standing (rather than sitting on chairs), climbing, running, exercising, using bikes, trikes and scooters. Inside and out

Going outside looking for, listening to, touching, smelling makes a good focus for a walk

Library & Story

We have started to lend out story sacks which can make reading a story more interactive. If you would like to borrow one of these please ask your child's keyworker. We only have a small selection currently but will be expanding the choice over



NEXT TERM SESSIONS

We have a number of children that are now eligible for 30 hour funding as of January 2026. If you think you might be eligible for 30 hours of funding for your 3 year old or your 2 year old because you work, please check via the childcare choices government website. <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> **before 31 December.** You will need to meet certain criteria which will be clear once you login. You may also be able to take advantage the Tax Free childcare scheme on the same

Teeth

As children are increasingly presenting with tooth decay across the country, we are keen to help our children to have better teeth health. We regularly talk to the children about what foods are not good for our teeth and how we need to brush them every day. We advise that you sign up with a dentist for your child as soon as they start on solid food so they can get used to going



Notices and requests

Payment of Fees

In line with rising costs, we have increased our hourly rate from £7.50 per hour to £8.00 per hour.

Cash is welcome or Cheques, made payable to ST JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH, POTTERS BAR, please write your child's name on the reverse

We can also accept payment via BACS, the bank details are as follows:

CAF bank St John's Methodist Church Potters Bar

Sort Code: 40 52 40

Account No: 00021445

Please use the name of your child as a reference.

Supporting your children

Children develop at different rates and at different ages. At St John's we support all children to move on to their next steps, whatever stage that is. In addition to the steps as outlined in the EYFS document, we are working on the following activities, particularly this term with so many children leaving to go to either nursery or reception: phonics - learning to distinguish between everyday sounds and some letter sounds; playdough gym; transition support; recognising their name and for those who are showing an interest, writing their name.

See the following link which gives excellent advice for pre-writing skills: <https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/writing/writing-readiness-pre-writing-skills/>

Healthy Eating

At St John's we promote and encourage healthy eating. We as a nursery, following our statutory guidelines, have to ensure our children are given and eat the healthy options. Chocolate or cakes etc. are always given to the children when they have eaten other options in their boxes. **Remember NO SESAME SEEDS and NO NUTS IN ANY FORM, INCLUDING PEANUT BUTTER OR NUTELLA.** We would ask parents please to cut all grapes, sausages etc in quarters lengthways, to avoid any choking hazards, and guidance also suggests avoiding popcorn and marshmallows (these can also cause a choking hazard). This is important and the responsibility of parents as we cannot spend time cutting up your child's fruit when we have to support all our children during lunch.



Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 3rd September—inset day

First day of term- Thursday 4th September.

Half Term-Monday 27th to Friday

31st October- Playgroup closed

Monday 3rd November- Return

Photography-To be confirmed

Nativity-To be confirmed

Wednesday 17th December- last day

Monday 5th January- Return

February half term- Monday 16th to Friday 20th.

Monday 23rd February -Return

Last day- Friday 27th March.

Easter Half Term-Monday 30th

March to Friday 10th April.

Monday 13th April -Return

Bank holiday- Monday 4th May

May half term-Monday 25th to Friday 29th.

Monday 1st June—Return.

Last day of term- Thursday 17th July.

Clothing

Please ensure your child arrives at playgroup in appropriate clothing for a fun, messy, outdoor, indoor, painting, gluing, playdough, water, shaving foam, cornflour, lots of fun kind of day! In this weather they should have a warm coat and sensible shoes (useable inside and outside) as we do go outside in all weathers unless it is really inclement. We have a supply of St John's fleeces, rain trousers and jackets which the children can grab in their haste to go outside and a stock of wellington boots if it is really wet with puddles. You could bring your child's Wellies, clearly named please.

Change of clothes

Can you also bring a change of clothes for your child in a small bag (drawstring gym bags are ideal for hanging 'low' on the peg, allowing room for the coat above).