



# Dash Matters

## Autumn 2009

As we begin the school year we welcome the parents of the new DASH intake, and for all we wanted to update you on some of the changes and improvements we have been working on and inform you of some of our developments for the year ahead.

### Full day playcare sessions – extended to school holidays

In response to recent demand we have extended the existing curriculum day playcare sessions into the school holidays. We ran a very successful week of playcare during the first week of the summer holiday as well as two curriculum days at the beginning of September. These included trips to several parks, bowling, and the cinema.

We will be providing the following playcare sessions and will also cater for future school holidays (excluding the Christmas break and Bank holidays). Sessions run from 8:30am-5:30pm with parents providing a packed lunch and Dash providing snacks and drinks.

Please note that these sessions are open to all children aged 4-11yrs from any school.

The following sessions are available:

Session prices (per booking per child)						
No of sessions	1	2	3	4	5	Each session thereafter
Cost	£22.50	£40	£60	£80	£95	£15

**October Half-term:** Monday 26<sup>th</sup>-Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October

**Curriculum Day:** Mon 16<sup>th</sup> November

**February Half-term:** Monday 15<sup>th</sup>-Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February

**Curriculum Day:** Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April (note that this links to the Easter holiday below)

**Easter holiday:** Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April-Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April

**Spring Half term:** Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> - Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June

**Summer Holidays (weeks 1, 2 and 3 only):** Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July-Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August

There will also be a further curriculum day session this school year which we will run a session for. Details to follow once school has announced the date.

For further information on any of these sessions or to request a booking form please contact Louise (Infant Dash Manager) 07866 868 221 or Becky (Junior & 8 o'clock Dash Manager) 07814 378 861 or email us [info@dashclub.org.uk](mailto:info@dashclub.org.uk)

## Change in Bookings policy

As you may have noticed we now require bookings to be made much further in advance. This is to ensure that we can take children off the Dash waiting list as soon as possible but has caused some concern for some parents who have raised the issue of not always being able to give notice of any school trips which their children may be attending. To address this issue we will now **accept cancellations of sessions with 4 weeks written notice** via the slips available in Dash. Refunds will be given by crediting the following invoice. Please note that refunds will not be available for sessions cancelled with less than 4 weeks notice as this incurs costs to Dash.

## Price increase

Due to increased running costs and planned improvements to Dash facilities, after school session prices are to increase to £7.00 from January. This increase will enable the investment needed to improve Dash.

## Staff changes

Three staff have left Dash this summer; Cat has gone to study Physiotherapy at Leeds, Anna is studying at Hallam University and Harriet is off to study in Manchester. I'm sure you will join us in thanking them for their hard work and wishing them all the best for their studies.

We are pleased to have recently taken on several playworkers. Rachele, who left Junior Dash in 2007 has now made a welcome return to the team! Emily has also joined us this September and is working in both Infant & Junior Dash.

We are also currently in the process of recruiting a further playworker so watch this space.....

## IT update

The committee approved the purchase of new PC's and a software package from our capital budget. We have been working through the summer to set up the new software called 'Connect' which is a booking, registration and invoicing system for the childcare market. This is expected to take full effect from November. We have great expectations that this will significantly improve our bookings, waitlist and invoice processes and cut down on paperwork to free up time for staff to work on planning and development. Hopefully you will see the benefits of this investment in the new school year.

## Website

The website [www.dashclub.org.uk](http://www.dashclub.org.uk) has been up and running for a year now. With changes to policies and pricing we are currently updating it and will add extra content in the coming months. The News and Events section will provide up to date information throughout the year.

## Lost property

As you may be aware Dash has collected rather a large amount of lost property over the last few months. We would urge you to spend just a few minutes looking through the lost belongings in Infant and Junior Dash to see if your items can be returned to you. Also we have items such as left toys and crafts made by the children in Dash and also in School, unfortunately due to a lack of space any items not collected will have to be recycled or put in the bin if not claimed.

We would also like to remind parents/carers not to allow your children to bring into Dash precious items of favourite toys in case they get broken or go missing, this does happen on occasion and can cause the children (and parents!) to become very upset/stressed when the belongings cannot be found.

SO IF ITS PRECIOUS PLEASE KEEP IT SAFE AT HOME!

## A message from the committee

In our last newsletter we asked for additional parents/carers/friends to come forward to volunteer as a committee member. There are only 6 of us and we still need more!

DASH is a charity, run voluntarily by the committee and to continuously improve our services and support the staff we need the involvement of parents, carers and other volunteers. We are therefore requesting that anyone who is interested in becoming a trustee or just volunteering to assist with projects could come forward to help us out, for the ultimate benefit of the children.

We are particularly looking for anyone who could help with any of the following:

- finance/budgeting
- premises improvements
- grants & fundraising
- marketing and website.

We also anticipate we will have an OFSTED inspection by the end of the year. This will be our main focus in the autumn term and will be performing a self-evaluation preparation.

We meet once every half term and recognise we are all busy people so you can be as involved as time allows. If you aren't able to commit to a trustee role then we ask you to help us continually improve our services by providing feedback through the suggestions box or email: [info@dashclub.org.uk](mailto:info@dashclub.org.uk).