



Report to Ashby St. Mary Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting Thursday 24th April, 2014

Thurton & Ashby St. Mary Pre-school has had a very busy year and although numbers dropped dramatically when children left to go to school in July, we have steadily increased through the year and now have 17 children registered from two to four years old. As we gained a Good judgement at our last Ofsted Inspection we are able to offer the new two year old funding of fifteen free hours to eligible families. We also continue to offer three and four year old funding the term after children reach three.

We have followed a pattern of fundraising this year, which seems to work for us. The Auto Jumble and Craft Fayre held in May was very successful, the village hall and playing field was filled with stalls, classic cars, bikes and people from near and far. We are very grateful to ex pre-school parents, grandparents and friends and the village community who continue to support us. The Christmas Bazaar was also successful and the children enjoyed visiting Father Christmas and the winter wonderland, which gets more wonderful each year thanks to Keith's vision.

Children, parents and staff visited Gorleston Fire Station in June and the children were able to sit in a real fire engine, a very popular trip. We also visited Thurton School in June as part of the children's transition process and Mrs. Pratt came to lunch with us. We were invited to see Reception and Year 1's Nativity Play in December, which we all enjoyed.

From October to February we took part in the Loddon and Long Stratton Writing Project, which helped us think of creative ways to encourage children to mark make and write and raise their literacy skills. We were given a small grant to buy equipment like lots of different brushes, large chalkboards, coloured paper and chunky felt pens. The course proved interesting and inspirational and we adopted the ideas and suggestions with the children. Thirty provisions took displays, photographs and resources to a celebration event in Norwich, which showed very positively how children's writing and mark making opportunities had developed.

Looking forward we have gained a grant to improve our outdoor area and will over the next few months develop ideas and resources to enrich natural sensory play opportunities. We know that access to play outdoors generates positive effects on the mood and self-esteem of all children as well as being lots of fun.

This year we will continue to welcome children and families into our early years provision and provide individual learning opportunities in a safe caring environment.

Sandra Rennie
Playleader

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