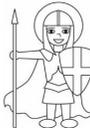


Calendar for the 1st Half of the Summer Term 2014

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
21 	22 Beginning of Summer Term Funding resumes for term time only children, Staff Meeting 6.00 pm	23 St George's Day 	24	25 
28	29 	30 Estelle Annual Leave	1 	2
5 May Day Bank Holiday, Grafton is Closed Today	6	7 	8	9
12 	13	14 Estelle Annual Leave	15	16
19 	20	21 Estelle Annual Leave	22	23 End of Half Term for term time only Funded Children
26 Spring Bank Holiday, Grafton is Closed Today	27 Estelle Annual Leave	28 Estelle & Zoe Annual Leave	29 Zoe Annual Leave	30 Zoe Annual Leave
2 Summer Term Funding resumes for term time only children	3	4 Estelle Annual Leave Staff Meeting 6.00 pm	5	6
9 	10 	11 Estelle Annual Leave	12 Start of the World Cup in Brazil	13 



Grafton Childcare

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Sport Relief 2014

We had an amazing week and pretty much smashed our previous record of money raised which was £60.80 to a new amazing total of £245.00.

We would like to thank the children, staff and parents for wholeheartedly helping support all our Woolly Jumpers you were all truly amazing.

The older children really enjoyed walking down to the bank to pay our money in the following week. In previous years we had simply done this online. But we decided that this year we would let the children have the honour of doing so, as they had raised such an amazing amount. The staff in our local Nat West branch were very sweet and asked to see the children demonstrate some of their Woolly Jumping skills, and the children were more than willing to show off their skills.



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Change of Suncream

As you know for many years Grafton Childcare has provided the Suncream we use on the children each Summer. For years we have used the Nivea 50+ for Kids. However this has now become extremely expensive and we have decided to change the brand we use.

This year we shall be changing over to No-Ad Kids 50+, which is around £8 for a 500ml bottle instead of £6 for a 200ml bottle of Nivea. We have tested it on ourselves and Denise's children and found no reactions.

However should you wish us not to use this suncream, then please pop a bottle of your preferred brand into your child's bag clearly labelled with your child's name. Please note that this will be taken out of your bag and kept here for the duration of the Summer for the sole use of your child as and when needed and not replaced into your bag on a daily basis.



Mud Mud Glorious Mud

Our Mud Kitchen has now been completed in the front garden and the children have already been out there having lots of fun creating their very own mud pies. There is little more important in our physical world than earth and water and they are truly intriguing things, especially when they interact. Mixing soil, water and a range of other natural materials has a foundational role in early childhood which has deep importance and endless possibilities for well-being, development and learning. The breadth and depth of what these experiences offer young children is truly remarkable.

Mud kitchens provide something quite different to a soil digging patch, whilst also being much more easily managed. A mud kitchen includes elements of the much-loved domestic corner and cooking from indoor play, which are then hugely enriched through the special nature of being outside. Mud kitchens work well all year round, and need to be seen as a core element of continuous provision outside.

Mud kitchens do not need to be fancy and certainly do not need to cost much. There is nothing to beat the simplicity and character of creating your own unique kitchen from scrounged, begged and discovered items. Here at Grafton we have created our own Mud Kitchen in our front garden, and it cost us less than £30, we managed to get an old Belfast sink and a stack of old pallets and some old

has been expanded to say they have, 'a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff is dismissed.... Because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.'

Staff qualification, training, support and skills

References to ensuring staff appraisals have been removed.

Staff:child ratios

From September Apprentices can be counted in ratios from age 16.

When graduates are working with children on a 1:13 ratio, the reference to 'a full and relevant' Level 6 qualification has changed to a 'suitable' one. A new footnote says that the teacher (or equivalent) is expected to be working with the children for the vast majority of the time under the 1:13 ratio.

Before-/after-school care and holiday provision

Loosening of regulation for these providers in terms of ratios, qualifications and learning and development - 'sufficient staff as for a class of 30 children'; 'for providers to determine how many staff are needed... And to determine what qualifications, if any, the manager and/ or staff should have.'

Managing behaviour

The requirement to have a behaviour management policy and a named practitioner responsible has been removed.

Safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment

Safety - requirement for health and safety policy removed.

Smoking - requirement for a no smoking policy removed.

Premises - the need to ensure that 'facilities, equipment and access to the premises are suitable for children with disabilities' has been removed and reference to the Equality Act 2010 added.

Premises - reference to provision being made for 'children who wish to relax, play quietly or sleep, equipped with appropriate furniture' has been removed.

Risk assessment - requirement for a risk assessment policy removed.

Outings - the requirement to obtain written parental permission to take children on outings removed.

Special educational needs

Changed to SEN from 'equal opportunities'. Need for a policy for equality of opportunity removed. Maintained nursery schools must have a SENCo others are 'expected to identify a SENCo'.

A DfE spokesperson has said, 'The new EYFS Framework strips out excessive regulation and prescription, letting childcare providers focus on the practicalities of looking after children rather than the bureaucracy. Providers must still comply with health and safety laws, the SEN code of Practice and show how they are keeping children safe.'

Thank You!

A huge 'Thank You' to everyone for the leaving gifts I received - I was quite overwhelmed. I was lucky enough to be presented with gift vouchers for Fermoy's and W H Smith - books and gardening are two of my passions. I was also given a bottle of Pimm's - I shouldn't say that drinking is one of my passions, but I shall certainly enjoy a glass of Pimm's in the garden during the summer and think of you all.

I intend buying some purple plants from Fermoy's - some lavenders, alliums and a buddleia - in order to remind me of Grafton. I shall definitely be buying some books from W H Smith - 'Pirates Love Underpants' is on my list, to go with my all time favourite 'Aliens Love Underpants'!

I shall still be popping into Grafton this term, as I shall be working with Lara and Denise to write the transition reports for children moving onto Reception classes in September; I am looking forward to seeing some of you on those days.

I have always said that working with children is the best job in the world. I loved my time working with the staff and all the children at Grafton; I shall remember them fondly as busy days filled with much laughter.

Best wishes to you all. Angela Evemy

Quick Guide to Changes in the EYFS

The Department of education has just released the new version of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), effective from September 2014.

Learning and development

The paragraph stating that wraparound and holiday providers should be guided by learning and development requirements, and seek to complement learning in settings in which children spend more time, has been removed.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning remain.

A sentence about providers regularly considering the training and development needs of all staff has been moved to the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements.

No change to the Early Learning Goals.

Assessment

Progress Check at Age Two - 'practitioners must discuss with parents and/or carers how the summary of development can be used to support learning at home' - removed. Reference to sharing information with 'a teacher (if a child moves to school-based provision at age three)' has been changed to 'the staff of any new provision the child may transfer to'. Requirement to do the progress check in time to feed into the Health and Development Review has been loosened.

Safeguarding and welfare

Providers' responsibilities under the safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

saucepans all for free from members of Freegle. We only needed to purchase some bins to keep our mud in and some batons to help strengthen the mud kitchen to hold our sink. All designed and built by Phil.

A water supply is essential, but it does not need to be in the kitchen or even close-by, as children love to fill containers both large and small to transport across to the kitchen for use. Our water butt is at the top of the garden and easy for the children to access when they need more water.

The mud kitchen context and materials result in young children engaging in an incredible variety of actions, such as:

filling, pouring, emptying, transferring, mixing, stirring, whisking, frothing, scooping, ladling, handling, moulding, patting, smoothing, mark-making, throwing, splatting, splashing, sharing out, serving, foraging, selecting, picking, collecting, gathering, garnishing, shredding, crushing, mashing, grinding, measuring, adding, brewing, boiling, sieving, filtering, separating, pipetting and decanting!

In the same way, the range of potential experiences is vast, including sorting, classifying, cooking, transforming, creating, enquiring, testing, repeating, experimenting, naming, labelling, decorating, embellishing, selling and using.

The perfect stimulus of experiencing and exploring the physical transformations (doing) taking place puts the brain into the perfect place for creating mental transformations (imagination) - and the mix easily becomes coffee with sugar, a birthday cake, soups and stews, ice cream in many flavours, lotions and 'make-up', magical drinks and potions, wizard's spells and perfumes... This work is filled with emotional, personal and social value, and offers the context for learning a wonderful range of new and interesting vocabulary and verbal language exchange and expression.

Being a Good Assistant

The main role adults need to take is of facilitator and enabler - making the kitchen available and supporting the play that then emerges from the children.

Good adult support consists of observing (noticing what is really taking place), striving to understand (recognising the significance of this for this child and this group of children) and then responding according to careful consideration as to what would help the child the most (which might be standing back out of the way!).

Supplying useful language for equipment, actions and descriptions can be very helpful provided it is done in context where it makes sense (and is not overdone!).

There is so much to mud kitchen play and its deeper meanings for children that the role of researcher would be highly valuable.

Some parents may not understand why this is all so valuable and important, and



JUNE 29

may have some objections, but we need to interpret what is really happening and advocate for mud play in all children's lives. Delving into the Meanings of Mud Play Young children are endlessly interested in - and biologically programmed to explore - the stuff of the earth, how materials behave and what they do.

Making connections through discovering and investigating cause and effect is the stuff of brain development and scientific process. Curiosity, fascination and the pleasure of finding things out are fundamentally important to the human state - being human.

An even more powerful level of experience for the explorer is that *they* are the one making things happen - giving feelings of control and power, and over time, building a child who has a strong inner sense of agency (which itself is key to well-being and mental health).

The processes of making 'concoctions' brings the worlds of science and art completely together through possibility thinking.

The growth of imagination and creativity happens through building on concrete cause-and-effect experience to posing and predicting 'what if...?'

Good scientists do this all the time, as do artists and all other innovators.

Even better, the experience of making concoctions brings the child into the realms of magic and fantasy, reminding us of the ancient fascinations of alchemy.

Keeping it Safe and Healthy

First and foremost, children must be kept safe enough whilst they have access to the important experiences that they need for full and healthy development. Our job is to manage an opportunity to make it safely available - not to remove it in the name of 'health and safety'. The requirement is to be 'as safe as necessary' rather than 'as safe as possible' (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents).

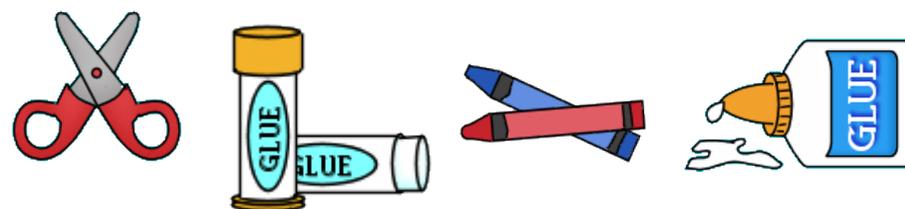
The current official approach is one of risk-benefit assessment - better thought of as benefit-risk assessment: that is, consider why the experience matters and then manage to make it available. Much more can be found in the government endorsed document *Managing Risk in Play Provision*, available to download from the Play England website. We have a copy here if any parent would like to loan in.

Contact with soil is actually beneficial as the bacteria in it help to build healthily functioning immune systems in young children (See *Why Dirt is Good* in booklist under 'Further information'), and research also suggests that this contact produces serotonin in the body - which makes us feel happy! The medically-supported *Hygiene Hypothesis* suggests that contact with the beneficial germs that we have evolved with is vital, and that harm is done by over sanitising children as we currently do. Soil can however carry harmful pathogens, and care to ensure no contamination from cat and dog faeces is very important. The mud in our mud kitchen is kept in very fetching purple dustbins with lids when not in use. Handwashing is important after playing in this way, so we have set up routines and expectations with the children, to embed hand-washing as habitual.

We are also delighted to announce that Miss Lara Rowe and Miss Jade Lofthouse will both be embarking on their Level 5 Diplomas in the Childrens and Young People's Workforce, this is a two year Diploma Course they'll both be undertaking whilst still working full-time.

We are also pleased to reveal that Lara has now been appointed our Senior Nursery Nurse with our two, three and four year olds and she will be working jointly with Ruth to plan and implement lots of wonderful learning opportunities for the children during the coming months, so watch this space.

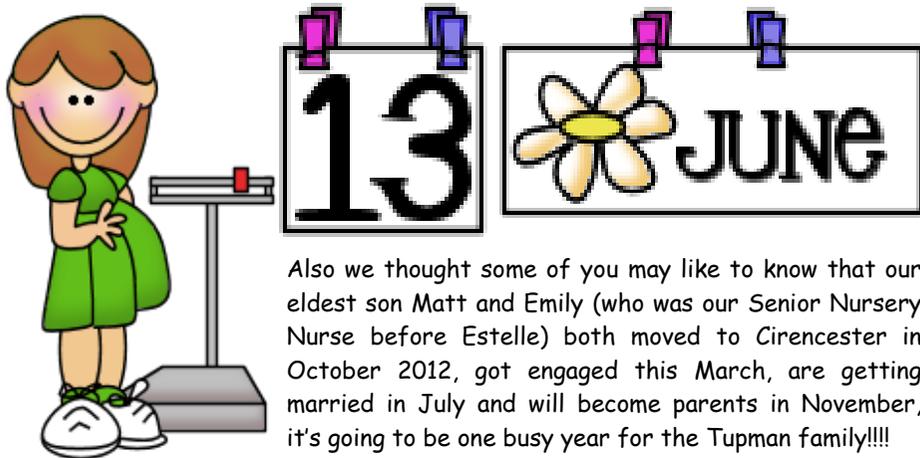
Our new Apprentice Miss Rebecca Murphy joined us last week, her start was delayed by a week because we were awaiting her DBS checks to come through. She will be working with our two, three and four year olds four days a week, for the next year whilst she completes her Level 2 Certificate in the Childrens and Young People's Workforce. It feels like we have known Rebecca for a very long time as back when she was 14 Rebecca spent a week with us during her school's work experience week and now she has turned 17 we have been able to offer her a position here as an Apprentice Nursery Nurse. Simply because we were blown away at the time with how well as a 14 year old she interacted with the children and told her if she ever decided she wanted to work with children to come and see us and we would find a position for her, which we now have.



We are sure the children have probably mentioned some other new names to you during the past few weeks, we have had a number of students on placements with us from local colleges, Kevin, Jessy, Alex, and Rae they each came and spent either one day a week with us, or blocks of weeks whilst they undergo their Early Years Training or for Work Experience. We would like to reassure all parents that we take the safeguarding of the children very seriously and at no point are the children left unsupervised with any students and none of the post 16 students may come on placements with us here at Grafton Childcare until they have had an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check completed on them. You might like to read our Recruitment and Safeguarding Policy which is up on our website which gives more details about the measure we take before we appoint any staff members or allow students to attend Grafton Childcare.

Staffing & Family News!

We wrote to you all back in February to let you know the exciting news that our Senior Nursery Nurse with the under two's, Miss Estelle Minton will be having a baby at the end of July. Estelle's maternity leave will be officially starting on Monday 30th June. However she has quite a bit of annual leave to use up before that date. So between the 30th April and the 11th June she will be taking Wednesdays off as part of her annual leave and then having a block of two weeks annual leave starting on Monday 16th June. So her final working day with us before she takes a years maternity leave will be on Friday 13th June, which scarily is only eight weeks away. At the moment we do not intend to replace her full-time position with the under two's but will review this later in the Autumn Term, once we have a firmer idea of numbers of under twos who will be commencing with us in September and October.



Also we thought some of you may like to know that our eldest son Matt and Emily (who was our Senior Nursery Nurse before Estelle) both moved to Cirencester in October 2012, got engaged this March, are getting married in July and will become parents in November, it's going to be one busy year for the Tupman family!!!!

Staffing News Continued

We are delighted to inform all parents that we have found a delightful bubbly new Nursery Teacher who will be joining us in May. Miss Ruth Muirhead-Smith, she has worked at Ark in The Park for the past four and a half years. She will be joining us each morning between 8.00 am - 2.00 pm and will be our new key worker for all of our three and four year olds from Tuesday 27th May. Although we would love her to start sooner, it will take a few weeks to get her DBS checks completed. We thought having her start during May Half-term would be a little bit gentler on her as this will be her first teaching post since she gained her BA (hons) in Early Childhood Studies last year. But we know she is more than capable as she spent two days with us recently on a work trial when the children put her through her paces.



Children also need to stay warm and comfortable - and mud kitchen work is likely to be wet and messy. We have purchase 22 sets of Muddy Puddles waterproof dungarees and all in one suits and most of the children have their own pair of wellies kept here for protection - when the dungarees and suits get overly muddy we just give them a quick wash and hang them up to dry.

The best risk management processes involve the children as a core control measure - we will always introduce new resources and experiences carefully, simply and slowly (one at a time, with plenty of time in between) with lots of emphasis on helping children access them safely and effectively. Less is always more with young children's experiences!

We ask the children to look for things they think could be harmful and get their agreement as to the best ways they can manage these (with keyworker support when needed), such as pots on the ground being a tripping hazard.

So if you have any old pots, pans, backing trays and tins kicking around the back of a kitchen cupboard we really would be very happy to take them off your hands and add them to our new Mud Kitchen here at Grafton Childcare.

We would like to thank Jan White & Liz Knowles from



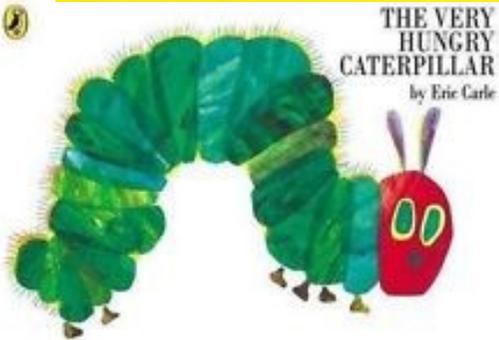
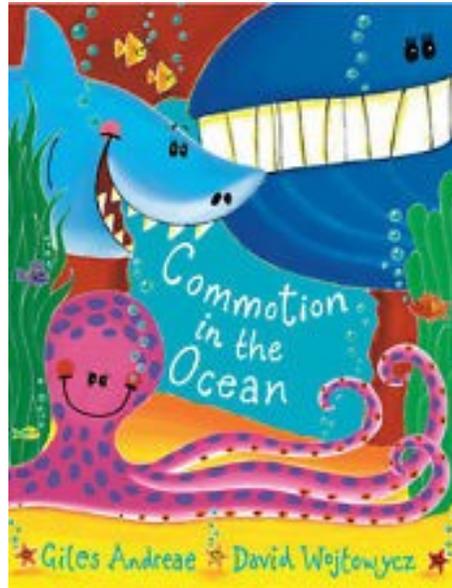
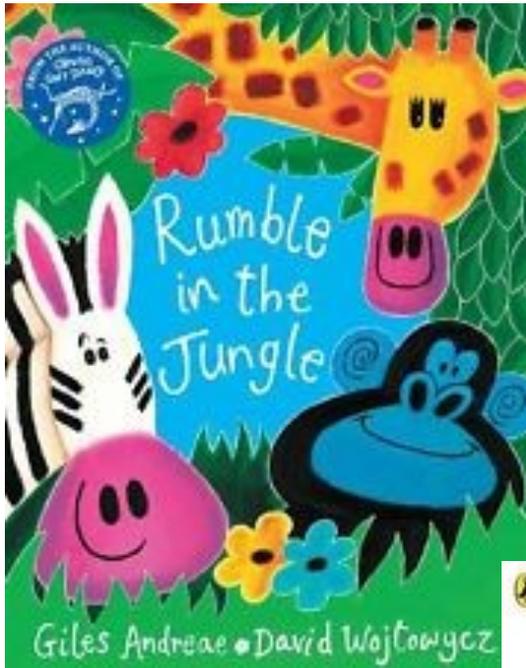
www.muddyfaces.co.uk for very kindly supporting us with design ideas and allowing us to adapt their booklet "Making a Mud Kitchen" for this shorter article. We have the full copy here should any parent wish to loan it.

Summer Term Topics

Summer Term - This term we will be using a range of themes and classic children's books as the basis for our activities and learning. We will be particularly focusing on the following:

- Mini beasts – The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Big beasts - Rumble in the Jungle
- Sea creatures - Commotion in the Ocean

As well as planned activities, we will also be noting, and following, the children's interests - who knows where that might lead us!



If you have any items at home that you would like to loan us to help extend these topics with the children we would be very grateful, we shall take very good care of them and return them once we have used them thank you. Remember to look in your child's Daily Diary or Communication Booklet, for your child's own personal copy of their **Next Steps** which will be stapled into your child's you can't miss it, it will be on lilac paper.



New Equipment & Resources

Since our last newsletter we have been busy adding new equipment, resources and consumables for the staff and children to use here at Grafton. We have purchased a new A2 laminator, A4 wallets for storing Children's Records. A new Wall mountable art drying rack, and replenished our stocks of paint and chalk, 2.5 litres of Suncream Lotion (see article on page 2). Six new roleplay outfits for our Farming/Spring Topic 2 Pigs, 2 Sheep and 2 Cows, a set of rather fetching (well Denise thinks so!) dustbins to keep our mud kitchen mud in and away from the pesky cats! 100 new white flannels for keeping the children spick and span, not to mention a new steam cleaner because Pat had a mishap with Steamy Steve!, oh and lots of Easter consumables for all the crafty items the children have created in the past couple of weeks.

We have recently discovered a new supplier of the most beautiful wooden toys made from sustainable Fairtrade rubberwood from Sri Lanka, Early Years Direct. We have purchased from them a huge chunky Wooden Ark complete with 27 pairs of chunky animals, a sizeable play castle with 24 chunky knights (just in time for St George's Day), and a huge wooden barn complete with 52 chunky wooden animals.

For some time we have been on the look out for a large wooden Work Bench which will help boost creativity, vocabulary and hand-eye coordination for the children. Early Years Direct have the most beautiful Fairtrade rubberwood one which includes saw, hammer, spanner, T Square, screwdriver and over 200 nuts and bolts and other bits and pieces with which the children can create their own range of wooden vehicles.

For those that have been reading our weekly blog you will know that Denise has been keeping her husband Phil pretty busy with lots of little jobs, including replacing the wooden handrail coming down from the playground, and putting up two new chalkboards on the decking as the old ones were looking a little bit tired. This Easter weekend she has drawn up a huge little of little mending and touch up

jobs to do around the place, those little jobs which can only be done when we don't have any little helpers around to lend a hand.

We hope that parents appreciate how much time, love and energy we put into finding, resources and equipment for the children to use and enjoy here at Grafton.



Transitions at Two

With more and more of our children being able to gain free funding for childcare the term after their second birthday, we have taken this opportunity to review at what point our two year olds transfer over to be with our three and four year olds during the day.

Previously once a child turned two, they would within a few weeks be moved over with the big ones if their keyworker felt that they were ready to do so.

However now that we are attracting more funded two year old children via the 2together scheme, we have felt that this would be a good time to review at what point it would be most beneficial for the child to move over to spend the majority of their time with the big ones.

If a toddler has been with us before their second birthday they will stay with the under twos until the beginning of the term after their second birthday. Once their Two Year old Progress check has been completed and their key worker feels that they are ready for the transition to spend the majority of their day with the big ones, then if the parent is also in agreement we will move them up with the big ones. New 2together funded children will start immediately with the big ones if there is a space available, if not they will stay with the under 2's until a space becomes available.

- ◆ For 2 year olds born between 1st April - 31st August, this will normally be at the beginning of the Autumn Term in September.
- ◆ For 2 year olds born between 1st September - 31st December, this will normally be at the beginning of the Spring Term in January.
- ◆ For 2 year olds born between 1st January - 31st March, this will normally be at the beginning of the Summer Term in April.

If you would like to know a little more about the Progress Checks which we produce for each child between 2 and 3 years of age you can read about them here in our October 2012 Newsletter, <http://www.graftonchildcare.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/October-2012-Newsletter.pdf>



Free childcare for 2 year olds are you eligible?

Your child may be eligible for free childcare for up to 15 hours per week from the term after their 2nd birthday. This scheme is aimed at families with low incomes and if someone in your family receives one or more of the qualifying benefits then your child will be entitled to receive free childcare. If you have a household income of less than £16,190 per year and you get either Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support or Employment Support Allowance you may be eligible for free childcare for your 2 year old.

The Government is extending the eligibility criteria for 2 year old funding with effect from September in order to reach 40% of 2 year olds throughout the Country. For us here is Devon that involves an increase of eligible families from 1200 now to 2600 under the proposed new criteria.

The free hours can be taken here at Grafton Childcare as we are registered with Devon to receive funding under the scheme as well as the already well established Free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds.

To check to see if you may be eligible go to www.devon.gov.uk/disc-2gether and either complete or download the online form. Once Devon has received your application they will enter your details on to the Department for Education's Eligibility Checking System. This will confirm whether or not you are eligible. Don't worry It will not tell them what benefits you are in receipt of, or how much you receive.

Once you have filled the form in online, save it, then email or post it to them using the instructions on the form. Or if you do not have access to a pc. Phone 0845 155 1019 with your National Insurance Number, date of birth, name and child's details for an eligibility check using the Department for Education's Eligibility Checking System.

Devon will send you a letter with their decision, usually within 5-10 working days. If you are eligible you should bring the letter to us as evidence that you are eligible. The funding will be paid directly to us each term. You can complete an application form before your child is two years old, but not before the term of their second birthday - however the childcare will not start until the term after your child's second birthday. Your local children's centre may also contact you to talk about what further support they can provide.

Here at Grafton we are dedicated to providing flexible family based childcare, allowing for Quality Learning Experiences. Including daily focused Phonics sessions, regular trips to Decoy or Courtney Park, weekly Baking sessions and lots of messy play.

If you would like to know more about what we have to offer here at Grafton why not telephone or email Denise Tel 01626 355066, denise@graftonchildcare.co.uk or take a look on our website www.graftonchildcare.co.uk

Thank you

We would like to say a huge thank you to the parents of the following children:- Lottie, Charlotte, Lucy, Paddy, Boann, Bobby, Jayden and Seth who have donated Fabric Scraps, Washable Nappies, Baby Toys and Books, Junk Modelling Boxes, Heart Shaped Tubs and 3 Giant Tubs of Chalk.

We really appreciate all of the items which parents very kindly pass on to us here at Grafton Childcare, thank you so much for your continued generosity.

Donations of Resources

Donations of toys and resources help us keep our costs down, so if you have any of the following items on hand and are willing to donate them, it would be greatly appreciated.

- **Old Saucepans and Baking Tins**, the older the better as they will be used outside by the children in our mud kitchen.
- **Dressing up clothing** child sized **not** old adult clothing, costumes, hats etc.
- **Magazines** that depict other cultures, old birthday cards etc.
- **Paper of any kind**, brown, white, coloured, waxed, foil, Spring colours would be very useful next month, etc.
- Crayons, water colour paints, or any misc. **art supplies**, such as fabric scraps, glitter, pipe cleaners, paper plates, etc.
- **Any odd shaped boxes or packages**, especially if you can get a dozen or so of the same size and shape, maybe from your place of work, we are very happy to help you recycle, these come in very handy for our junk modelling.
- **Used padded envelopes and bubble wrap**, any size or amount.
- **Anything** that you think we might find useful for arts and crafts, just ask if your not sure.
- **Any non treated wood**, i.e. an old tree which we can chop up for our wood burners, Phil has a small chainsaw, so is happy to come and chop any large logs into moveable pieces!

Grafton Childcare's Opening Times 2014

Monday to Friday from 7.00 am till 7.00 pm, We are open 49 weeks a year.

We shall be closed on:- Friday 18th April (Good Friday),
Monday 21st April (Easter Monday), Monday 5th May (May Day),
Monday 26th May (Spring Bank Holiday).

The whole year can be viewed on our website