

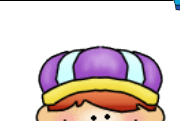








Calendar for 2nd Half of Autumn Term 2013 & 1st Half of 2014

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9		11	12	13 Stover Break up 4 Christmas
16		18 Christmas Dinner 12 noon Party Games and Clothes pm	19 (20th Staff Dinner at Pizza Café 8pm)	20 Early Years Funding & 2together Funding finishes for Term-time only kids & Restarts 6th
23 Grafton Closes at 7 pm for Christmas			24th December - 27th December, Grafton Childcare will be closed.	
30th December - 1st January 2014, Grafton Childcare will be closed.		2	2 Grafton reopens at 7 am	3
6 Epiphany Early Years Funding & 2together Funding restarts for Term-time only children		8 Stover Returns	9	10
13		15	16	17 (18th Parents' Open Morning 9 am - 1pm)
20	21	22 Staff Meeting 6.15 pm	23 	24 (25th Burn's Night)
27	28	29	30 	31 (18th Parents' Open Morning 9 am - 1pm) Chinese New Year, Year of the Horse
3 (2nd Ground Hog Day)	4	5	6	7 (7th-23rd Winter Olympics, Sochi Russia)
10	11	12	13 (14th Valentines Day)	14 Early Years Funding & 2together Funding finishes for Term-time only kids & Restarts 24th



Grafton Childcare

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School Admissions for 2014/15

Devon's application facility for Primary School places in September 2014 is now open and will close at midnight on 15th January 2014. Children born between **1/9/2009** and **31/8/2010** will require Primary School places from September 2013, although parents may defer entry, they must apply by 15th January 2014 to be considered for a place.

Start dates can be discussed with Schools once offers have been made. Late applications will not be considered above timely ones where schools are oversubscribed. **Please apply on time!** Details of the school offered will be sent by email on the morning of 16th April, 2014, followed by a hard copy letter, sent 2nd class post.

There is a single offer point of September, but parents can defer or delay. Devon's admissions team will offer all places on **15th April** for a September start. Parents can negotiate start dates direct with the school later in the process, if a delay is desired.

Devon are striving to reduce the number of late applications and the consequent distress to parents and children when they aren't offered their local school, or the school their siblings already attend.

Statutory school age, your child must be in full-time education by the start of the term following their fifth birthday, but this does not mean that they have to be in education before then. As parents when you are offered a place for September you have the following options:

December 2013	
Us & the Early Years Register	3
Parent's Open Mornings	4
Notice-board & Blog	5
Thank You	6
Opening Hours & 2014 Calendar	8
Review of Nursery Fees	
Welcome & Congratulations	9
New Equipment	10
Grafton Bear & Gates	11
Spring Term	12



for Childminding

1. Full-time admission to Reception,
2. Part-time admission to Reception up to the statutory school age,
3. Part-time attendance at Grafton Childcare or another pre-school setting while deferring a place in Reception.

But you cannot take a part-time place in Reception and free Early Years Entitlement Funded place at Grafton Childcare or another pre-school setting. Neither can you take a free full-time Early Years Entitlement Funded place at Grafton Childcare or another pre-school setting, although you could arrange for additional pre-school hours but would have to pay for them.

As a parent, you have the right to defer your child's admission until statutory school age, at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday, even though you will have been offered a place for the previous September. This is a decision for you as a parent to make. We would advise you to take all factors into account including advice of the head of the Early Years Foundation Stage at the school and the Head of Grafton Childcare, Denise Tupman.

Not all four year olds will have reached the required levels of self-confidence, self-esteem self-care and emotional development to attend full-time school from September, this is why Devon previously offered a Two Point entry system of September and January!

If you wish to defer admission, you must inform the school which has been allocated. **That place will be held open up to the start of the term after your child's fifth birthday within that academic year by the school, and will not be offered to another child.** However you must inform the school in writing of your intention to do so, otherwise your child's place may be withdrawn and offered to another child.

Child's fifth birthday	Can defer until
1 September - 31 December	January
1 January - 31 March	January OR April, the start of the Summer Term
1 April - 31 August	January OR April OR the next September with a fresh application for a Year 1 place.

We hope that we have explained the admissions process and things are a little clearer for you all. However if they are not or if you would like to discuss in more detail whether or not it might be in the best interests to defer the entry of your particular child into full-time education particularly for those whose birthdays fall between the 1st January and the 31st August, either drop Denise an email or pop a note into your child's Daily

Last but by no means least, some green fabric, and other assorted props to help create our Santa's Grotto roleplay area during December.

Grafton Bear & Spring Term 2014

Next Term our Topics for the first four weeks of the Spring Term will be Winter which officially starts on the 22nd December, so the children will be enjoying lots of Winter Activities including lots of fun with Snowmen and Ice, fingers crossed we may even get some real snow.

We shall also focus on Chinese New Year which this year falls on the 31st January and this coming year will be the year of the Horse. If you have any resources which you would like to share from home to help us celebrate Chinese New Year with the children that would be fantastic.

We shall be also introducing parents to Grafton Bear, he will be going home with one family each week to spend some time with them so he can find out all out your family and then share that information with us here at Grafton. He will have his very own scrapbook for you to help your child complete during his visit. It would be lovely if you could support your child with this and possibly take a couple of photos and stick them into Grafton's scrapbook to help him to remember what you have all been up to and possibly write a little bit about his adventures at your home. We are very happy for those who do not have access to a printer, for you to email us a couple of pictures and a short article for us to print out and pop into Grafton's scrapbook to help your child to share their adventures.

Gates, Bags Daily Diaries and Communication Books

Can we please gently remind parents and carers that the rear double gates are open each morning between 7.00 am - 9.30 am and then each afternoon between 4.00 pm - 7.00 pm. All children must be dropped off at the rear conservatory door between those times, with their Bag containing changes of clothes, Calpol, nappies and their Daily Diary or Communication Booklet. If they do not have these then sadly they and their child will be turned away at the doors. We will not tolerate any parent verbally abusing our staff at the door because they have forgotten these items. If you arrive between 9.30 am and 4.00 pm when the rear double gates are closed, please walk around to the front door of number 24 Torquay Road and ring the bell and we will let you in. When using the front door please remember to face the door bell as it contains a very small camera. If we cannot see your face we will ask who is at the door. If you do not respond we will **NOT** open the door. Please do not repeatedly ring the front doorbell it is very loud and although you cannot hear it, it is positioned inside the premises where the staff can. The staff are not permitted to allow children to enter via the rear gates once they have been closed at 9.30 am, please respect this and do not ask staff to do so. Please remember these measures are simply for the safety and security of your children, so that we can keep them all safe & sound & secure.

New Toys & 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 some new large purple dustbins for storing some of our resources which the children access outside, to protect them from the elements.

Each of the over 2's, 3's and 4's have been given a large purple exercise book in which we shall be encouraging them to do their gluing and sticking and any "phonics or mathematics work" they may want to do around our topics. But it will be up to the children to decide as and when they would like to add to their Books.

We have just ordered a new batch of 1000 observation stickers, which we complete and stick into the children's Learning Journals, we can't believe we have used up the last batch of a 1000 so quickly.

We have a new Big Book Stand, which is very handy during our literacy, phonics and mathematics sessions so we can pop our large books onto it so that all of the children can clearly see and follow along with the activities.

100 Wooden Stars and Tree shapes which the children are very industriously turning into the most beautiful decorations to add to your Christmas trees, we hope you love them as much as the children have enjoyed making them.

A set of purple neck lanyards for the staff to wear in the new year watch this space for more details.

A new cosy corner cushion for the under 2's to crash out on of an afternoon should they need 40 winks.

A kilo of green glitter, 2 dozen glue sticks and other craft items from Crafty Crocodile.

Two new pop up tents one for the under 2's and an amazing VW Camper version for the over 2's, a new Wooden Small World Play Double Decker Bus for the under 2's and a new Wooden Till and Scales for the over 2's, which came in very handy for their Baker's Shop recently.

A new collection of clip art from Thistle Girl Designs, we hope you enjoy them they are just what we needed to spice up our newsletters and our weekly planning sheets.

A new set of cookie stampers for the under 3's to use when they are making cookies, we are looking forward to making lots more scrummy cookies during 2014, we hope you enjoyed the ones they made for Children in Need.



Diary and we will make an appointment to discuss your child's admissions arrangements more fully.

But either way please remember you must apply for a place as normal online at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline or on the Devon Common Application Form by the deadline of 15 January 2014. Remember Places will be offered to start in September but parents may wish to defer until the term of the child's 5th birthday.

Remember no decision about this is needed at the time of application. But not applying in time can severely disadvantage applicants for oversubscribed and popular schools.

Grafton Childcare - Early Years & Childcare Registers

When Grafton Childcare first opened in 1991 we cared for just three children each day, how things have changed as we now provide Early Years Childcare for almost 40 children under 5 years of age every day 50 weeks a year and have a very healthy waiting list for places next year. We would like to thank all of our wonderful parents, children and of course our amazing team of staff for this astounding success story.

Grafton Childcare has been registered to provide childcare since 1st July 1991 when Denise originally registered as a Registered Childminder and slowly took on a number of Registered Assistants as Grafton expanded and her young sons started schools themselves. Then on the 2nd September 2008 Grafton Childcare expanded again and became Childcare on Domestic Premises when operating with four or more staff and remaining as Childminders when operating with less than 4 staff. This has worked really well for the past five years, but has meant that we have been required to duplicate an awful lot of paperwork at times which was very time consuming.

The Early Years Register covers children up till their 5th birthday and the Childcare Register covers children from five years of age up until their 8th birthday. We have provided wrap-around childcare for children between five and eight years of age for over 22 years. However the childcare market has changed massively in the past five years with most local Primary Schools now offering some form of either breakfast and after school clubs and/or holiday clubs.

These clubs are highly subsidised having no rent or business rates to pay unlike a private setting like Grafton Childcare, they also run at much higher child to adult ratios than Grafton Childcare, which means that their fees are significantly



lower than our all inclusive rates of £4.10 per hour. The upshot being that Denise was providing wrap-around childcare for only one or two children each day and a similar number during school holidays, which was simply no longer sustainable. In October we took the long hard decision to resign from the Childcare Register and October half-term was the last time we operated our Holiday provision for 5 - 8 year olds, it was a bit of an end of an era.

On the 3rd February 2014 Denise also intends to resign her registration as a Childminder as well. The main effect this will have is that we will no longer be able to offer overnight childcare or any home based babysitting services to parents even if these were done previously for free! However as only two families have used this facility in the past two years the escalating public liability costs to offer this underused service also sadly make it no longer sustainable.

Grafton Childcare has grown massively in the past 22 years and we shall now be concentrating on what we do best providing flexible family based quality childcare for 0 - 4 year olds.

Grafton Childcare
Where Quality Childcare is Not Expensive -
It's Priceless

♥ TEACHERS RULE! ♥

Parents' Open Mornings in January & February 2014

On Saturday the 18th January and Saturday 1st February we shall be holding another set of our Parents' Open Mornings. These are for parents to come along and have a good look around the setting at what has changed over the past year, take a peek at all of our lovely new resources and equipment.

You will also have the opportunity to look at your child's individual Learning Journals and chat to either Louise, Lara, Estelle or Denise about the progress your children are making here at Grafton Childcare.

We shall be offering 15 minutes appointment slots starting promptly at 9am and finishing at 12.45 on both Saturdays. We hope as many of you as possible will take this opportunity to come along so that we can share with you all of the wonderful things your children have been doing and a snapshot of some of the exciting things we will have planned for 2014..... We shall be putting up appointment sheets in the conservatory please book your slots asap. Or email Denise to let us know which date and time you would like to book and we can confirm if it is still available. denise.tupman@inbox.com

Welcome to Daisy & Pat

We are delighted to inform parents Miss Daisy Nickless has joined us initially three days a week in November and we fully anticipate increasing it to four days early next year she has already become an important part of our growing team of Level 3 Qualified Nursery Nurses, she qualified earlier this year and will be working with our 2 year olds.

We are also delighted to welcome back Denise's sister Miss Patricia Clements who has agreed to become our Cleaner, although she has been rather thrown in at the deep end coping with the amount of glitter everywhere at the moment!



Congratulations to Zoe

We would all like to congratulate Zoe Northcott who passed her Level 2 Diploma in the Children's and Young People's Workforce during the Summer. She has worked so hard over the past year to achieve this and has now finished her Apprenticeship with us here at Grafton. We are so delighted we have given Zoe a full-time position as a Junior Nursery Nurse whilst she undertakes her Level 3 Diploma in the Children's and Young People's Workforce.



Congratulations to Estelle

We would all like to congratulate Estelle Minton our Senior Nursery Nurse with the under two's who got engaged during her recent very romantic holiday to Cyprus where her partner Ryan Stevens very romantically asked for her hand in marriage. She came back not only with a lovely tan but also a beautiful ring on her finger, bless :-)



Grafton Childcare's Opening Times 2014

Monday to Friday from 7.00 am till 7.00 pm
We are open 50 weeks a year

We will be Closed between Tuesday 24th December 2013 and 1st January 2014 and reopen on Thursday 2nd January 2014.

We shall be closed on:-

Friday 18th April (Good Friday) 2014

Monday 21st April (Easter Monday) 2014

Monday 5th May (May Day) 2014

Monday 26th May (Spring Bank Holiday) 2014

We will be closed between Monday 25th August (Summer Bank Holiday) 2014 and Friday 29th August 2014 and will reopen on Monday 1st September 2014

We will be Closed between Wednesday 24th December 2014 and 1st January 2015 and reopen on Friday 2nd January 2015.

Grafton Childcare's Nursery Fees

Each September we review our childcare fees and decide if we intend to increase them or not with any increase usually commencing from the 1st October to coincide with any increase in the National Minimum Wage, increases in Energy Costs, Business Rates etc each year.

We are sure that you will be pleased to know that this year we have decided to keep our hourly rate fixed at £4.10 per hour until the 30th September 2014 when we shall review our Nursery fees again. Our fees compare very favourably with other high quality local settings, in fact we are cheaper than all of them. We only charge an all inclusive £4.10 per hour. But remember this is inclusive of our own washable nappies & freshly prepared home cooked meals, baby milk, milk and snacks, as well as all trips.

Adult to Child Ratios - 0-2 years maximum of 1:3 children, 2-3 years maximum of 1:4 children, 3-4 years 1:8 or 1:13 children when our qualified teacher is in ratio. When on local outings and trips we operate considerably higher ratios than the minimum ratios as stated above.

Grafton's Parents' Noticeboard!

We would like to thank all of the parents and visitors alike who have commented on our lovely new external notice board up on the wall outside our kitchen and beside the conservatory door. We are delighted that so many of you are taking the time to read it either before or after you have dropped your children off each day, thank you.

On the board you will see a simplified copy of our weekly plans for both the under two's and over two's so that you can all use this as a visual reminder of any activities we have planned for the children during the week.

Grafton's Parents' Blog!

43 of our families have now signed up to our blog, but we were aware that we are still not reaching 18 of our families who are missing out on any information, newsletters and planning which are being shared via our blogs and regular emails. Remember you can now find us at :- <http://graftonchildcare.wordpress.com/> It would be lovely if a few more parents and friends of Grafton Childcare could follow our new blog. Just copy the link above and then on the bottom right hand side of the screen you will see a follow link. Click on this and enter your email address and once you have verified your email address you will be automatically informed when Grafton's Blog is updated, neat don't you think! Mummies, Daddies and Grandparents are all very welcome to sign up.

We are using the blog to keep in touch with the majority of our parents letting them know about what we have been up to here at Grafton. We will be posting each week with our plans for the following couple of weeks and any plans we might have for the future. We still intend to send out our regular newsletters but are aware that the way that parents access information is rapidly changing and we, well Denise needs to move with the times and embrace the world wide web and modern technology as a whole.

If you have not yet given us an email address to which we can send copies of our newsletters and invoices, could you please email Denise and she will add you to our mailing list, denise@graftonchildcare.co.uk or denise.tupman@inbox.com Could we remind those parents who still receive their newsletters in paper format that you need to regularly check your child's bag and folder and **remove copies of any old or current newsletters**, so that we know that they have been read and the contents taken note of, thank you.





Thank you for helping us to raise £187.00 for Children In Need 2013

The Children and Staff all thoroughly enjoyed dressing up as their favourite Nursery Rhyme Characters or in Spotty Clothes and baking some pretty amazing Jam Tarts and Pudsey Bear Cookies which they then cunningly sold to their parents.



Grafton's Nappy Changing Procedures

Please remember we leave your child in their disposable nappy if clean when they first arrive and will then only later when it needs changing begin to use our washables. This will mean that parents need to keep us supplied with 6-10 nappies at a time which we shall store here in your child's cubbies and not in your bags as previously. **Please could you ensure that you pop 6-10 disposable nappies into your child's bag next week**, we shall remove them and pop them straight into your child's cubbies and circle **Nappies** in your child's Daily Dairy or Communication Booklet when we need some more. We only use washable nappies here and should you not keep us stocked up with disposable nappies to use when your child leaves at the end of the day, we will have to send your child home in one of our washable nappies. Please wash it before you return it, thank you.

Thank You

We would like to say a huge thank you to the parents of the following children:- William, Jamie, Mia, Bobby, Jayden & George who have donated 2 Plastic Pelican Bibs, Baby Toys, a Bouncy Chair, Puzzles, Christmas Cards & Stickers, Christmas Fabric, Baby Stickle Bricks and all of the children who brought in Junk Modelling Items during our Science and Technology Fortnight.

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.

- **Carrier bags**, we never have enough here to send home wet and soiled clothing from trips out, crafty creations and the odd mishap.
- **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, Winter 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**, 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!

During this build up to Christmas time and just after when making room for all of your new gifts, please think of us before throwing out all that ribbon that wrapped up those parcels. We would love to have all of those fancy bags which your gifts came in, not only can we make use of the fancy paper but also the cord handles.