

Hi everyone

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you all for this new session, and a particular welcome to our new families who are joining us this year.

We've had a really lovely week as staff and children reconnect and build relationships with our new children and families. We are taking time to get to know our new children, talking to them about their favourite toys to play with, observing and reassuring them that Cart Mill is great fun and special adults always come back!

### **Cart Mill Chat**

Every Friday you will be emailed 'Cart Mill Chat' with general news, staff updates, community events and important information. We email this on a Friday to ensure that you aren't bombarded with lots of snippets of information during the week.

We share Cart Mill Chat on our website as you may want to direct family members or your child's carers to read this.

### **Updating our Home Room**

All our Cart Mill families are very different but all are really special. Children feel safe when they see familiar things around them, and by having pictures of themselves and their families on the wall, not only do we build a sense of security for them in the physical environment, but their sense of self-esteem is also developed.

We ask that you send in a few family photos of children's special people or pets to update our home room walls. These can be emailed or printed, whatever is easiest.

### **In-service Days**

We had really busy in-service days this week with all staff reviewing our Improvement Plan, some staff attending 'Trauma Informed Practice' training, some staff attending 'Nurture and Developmental Trauma' sessions and the full team attending the annual update of Child Protection procedures and policy.

### **Can you help?**

Have you got any pasta, pulses or dried rice lurking in your cupboards that are past their use-by date? If you have we'd love these for children to use during sensory experiences or role-play. Please don't be embarrassed or think we'll judge, I know that I buy lots of dried items for my own house and have great intentions of using these but then they get overlooked and go past their sell-by.

We are always looking for old vegetables that are past their best for children to play with. If you have any old potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots and parsnips children would love these to enhance their role-play dinners.

### **Quality Mealtimes**

Meal and snack times in Cart Mill offer many rich opportunities for children to connect and engage in conversation with other children and staff. Meal and snack times can help contribute to children's learning, development, and health and wellbeing. We use guidance from Care Inspectorate to reflect and review our practice and ensure high quality experiences for children.

We ask that all lunch boxes have an ice pack to keep items cool and are labelled with your child's name. We have many wee ones with the same lunch box and we really don't want tears! Thank you for your help with this.

We have milk and water available at breakfast and snack time for children to have alongside their food. At lunch time children can freely access water. Due to cross contamination, children having similar water bottles or wanting to share with friends *we would ask that water bottles are kept at home.*

If your child is having a small breakfast in Cart Mill, on arrival before 8.45am, we'd ask that they bring only one or two items to eat as may feel pressured into eating everything that is provided. Please let Janet or whoever is at the door at drop off if they have breakfast with them.

We have a new board at the front of the centre where you can see the lunch menu for the day. The menu to October 2023 is available here: [Nursery Lunch Menu](#)

We've had a few children confused about their hot lunch as they've been provided with a lunch box too. We completely understand that it's early days with some children moving from bringing a packed lunch as a 2 year old to now having a hot lunch in their 3-5 place and want to support children during this transition. Should your child be having a hot lunch we would kindly ask that your child doesn't bring a lunch too as this can be very confusing for children. Should you want to speak to us about this, please speak to or email myself, Sarah-Jane or Val.

### **Hours**

As a staff we spend some of our time reassuring children that Cart Mill is great fun and that their special adults always come back! I ask that you drop off and collect your child at the correct time as children can be quite unsettled if their routine is disrupted or their special person is late. Please let us know if you are unsure of your child's session times.

We staff Cart Mill from 8am-6pm according to the number of children we have at different points of the day to meet the different attendance patterns.

On occasion, if dropping off your child before their start time we may have to ask you wait with your child until we are adequately staffed. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **New Training Available-starting soon**

Please find attached a flyer for the new SCQF Childcare units (run in partnership with West College Scotland). These modules are a great opportunity for parents, or anyone, who has been out of work or struggling to get started in a career in childcare. If you would like to speak to any of the staff for a bit of information about a career in childcare, we're here.

### **Annual Calendar**

I hope you all received the Annual Calendar via email. By having dates in advance you may be able to make time to attend events, Bookbug sessions and family times in Cart Mill.

Dates when Cart Mill is closed are shared on our Annual Calendar 2023 to 2024. The Annual Calendar is available to view on our website by clicking the link:

[Annual Planning Calendar 23-24.](#)

Our Annual Calendar dates may be subject to change and where possible we will give you notice of changes in plenty of time.

### **East Renfrewshire Holiday Dates**

Please click on the link to see the **term-time** holiday dates for 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025:

[ERC School Holidays](#)

### **Dressing for nursery**

Early years is about discovering, creating and experimenting with messy materials. Parents and carers are asked to bring children to nursery in 'play' clothes, not 'best clothes' .i.e. easily washed, sleeves which roll up easily and trousers which allow independence.

As part of ERC 'Dressing for Excellence' policy we would remind you that football tops or team kits should not be worn. Thanks for your cooperation with this.

### **Communication**

We are here to help with any matter, small or large, so please do get in touch with us either at drop off or pick up time, by contacting the centre by telephone (0141 570 7560) or emailing: [schoolmail@cartmill.e-renfrew.sch.uk](mailto:schoolmail@cartmill.e-renfrew.sch.uk)

Depending on your query, Janet in our office may be able to help, or you can of course request to speak to one of our leadership team or your child's keyworker.

When your child's keyworker is working with children we may need to take a message and ask them to call at a more convenient time.

We are all here to support every child and family, and very much look forward to working in close partnership with you throughout the coming session.

I hope you have a lovely weekend with your family.

Many thanks

*Angela Kerr*

Acting Head Teacher

Cart Mill Family Centre