



### Term Dates

Return to Playgroup for Spring Term: Wednesday 3rd January 2024  
Break-up for Half Term: Friday 9th February  
Return to Playgroup for 2nd Half of Spring Term: Monday 19th February  
Break-up for Easter: Thursday 28th March

### Welcome Back...

...and Happy New Year to all our families. We also hope you had a lovely Christmas and enjoyed the festivities at Playgroup in the run up to it.

The older children were fantastic and delighted us all with their performance of the Nativity, with additional festive songs, we all enjoyed visits from Father Christmas and even had snow on our final afternoon!

We would also like to send sincere thanks to all the families that so kindly gave staff gifts - in the hustle and bustle, we sometimes miss individual 'thank yous' but the gestures are much appreciated. Also, many thanks to those who either donated raffle prizes to us or bought tickets on the day of the Nativity. As a charity, all monies raised go directly into providing as an educational and exciting experience possible for your children in their time spent with us.

### Other News

From April 2024, the government are extending their offer of up to 15 hours funded childcare for working families of 2 year olds. To qualify, the following must apply:

- Your child is 2 years old or will turn 2 years old before 1 April 2024
- You earn at least £8,670 a year and less than £100,000 a year adjusted net income, which is your income after some tax reliefs and deductions
- If you're a couple, you'll both need to earn between these amounts.
- If you already get 15 funded hours of childcare from the government you can't get these hours as well.
- You can get the 15 hours of funded childcare at the same time as using Tax-Free Childcare or Universal Credit for childcare.
- You'll need to reconfirm your eligibility every 3 months. To do this you'll be asked to set up a Government Gateway Account if you don't have one already.



If you are eligible, you'll get 15 hours of funded childcare **the term after** your child turns 2.

From September 2024, the scheme will be extended to include children 9 months and older but here at William Older Playgroup, we only admit from 2 years old so your funding here will remain the same i.e. qualifying by meeting the above terms and **the term after** they turn 2.

To see if you qualify or to apply, please visit the government 'Childcare Choices' website: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk), it will be open for applications from around mid-January 2024.

## Hartbeeps

This Spring, the older children will continue to enjoy Hartbeeps, a music and sensory session, on Thursday afternoons, at no cost to families.

## Library Bus

This will visit for stories and book borrowing, every third Monday, in the afternoon.

## Snack

At Playgroup, there are no additional or hidden 'top-up' fees but we do provide the children with a healthy snack plus milk / water / hot chocolate each morning and would ask, as a charity, for your continuing support by giving voluntarily monetary contributions for this. We have a 'Snack Pot' outside our front door for cash contributions or donations can be made via online banking with the reference 'SNACK' to:

Account Name: William Older Playgroup

Sort Code: 30-95-09

Account Number: 00626350

## Baby & Toddler Stay & Play Group

We run a group here between 9 and 10.30 on Thursday mornings, at just £2 per session and a hot drink included for the adults - please spread the word. We have found those children attending and then joining us formally at an older age settle very quickly and smoothly.



## Facebook / Instagram Reminder

We use our Facebook and Instagram pages to help keep you up to date with all the exciting activities your children are experiencing. We know it's not for everyone but if you change your preference and are happy to let your child be featured in our posts, then please let us know any time. Please 'like' and 'follow' us and our posts as it gives us an indication of our audience.

## William Older Playgroup T-shirts, Hoodies and Jackets

We have new stock of our William Older Playgroup t-shirts available to purchase from us at £7 each. We also have hoodies priced at £16 each and a few reversible fleece showerproof jackets at £18 each. Please see Sue or a staff member if you are interested, there are photos of the items available on our front and back doors.

## And finally...

We want our families to feel part of Playgroup and their child's journey with us. Your Keyperson should arrange at least termly catch ups but if you need to speak to them or the Manager, Sue, then please book an appointment at any time. If you don't see us then you can ring to do this on 01903 771025 or email us at [williamolderplaygroup@gmail.com](mailto:williamolderplaygroup@gmail.com) and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

The deadline for applying for a school place for children born between 1st September 2019 and 31st August 2020 is Monday 15th January 2024. The admission form can be found at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions).

*Sue & the Team*