



## PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE CLUBS NEWSLETTER

Well, we have had a very, very busy term!

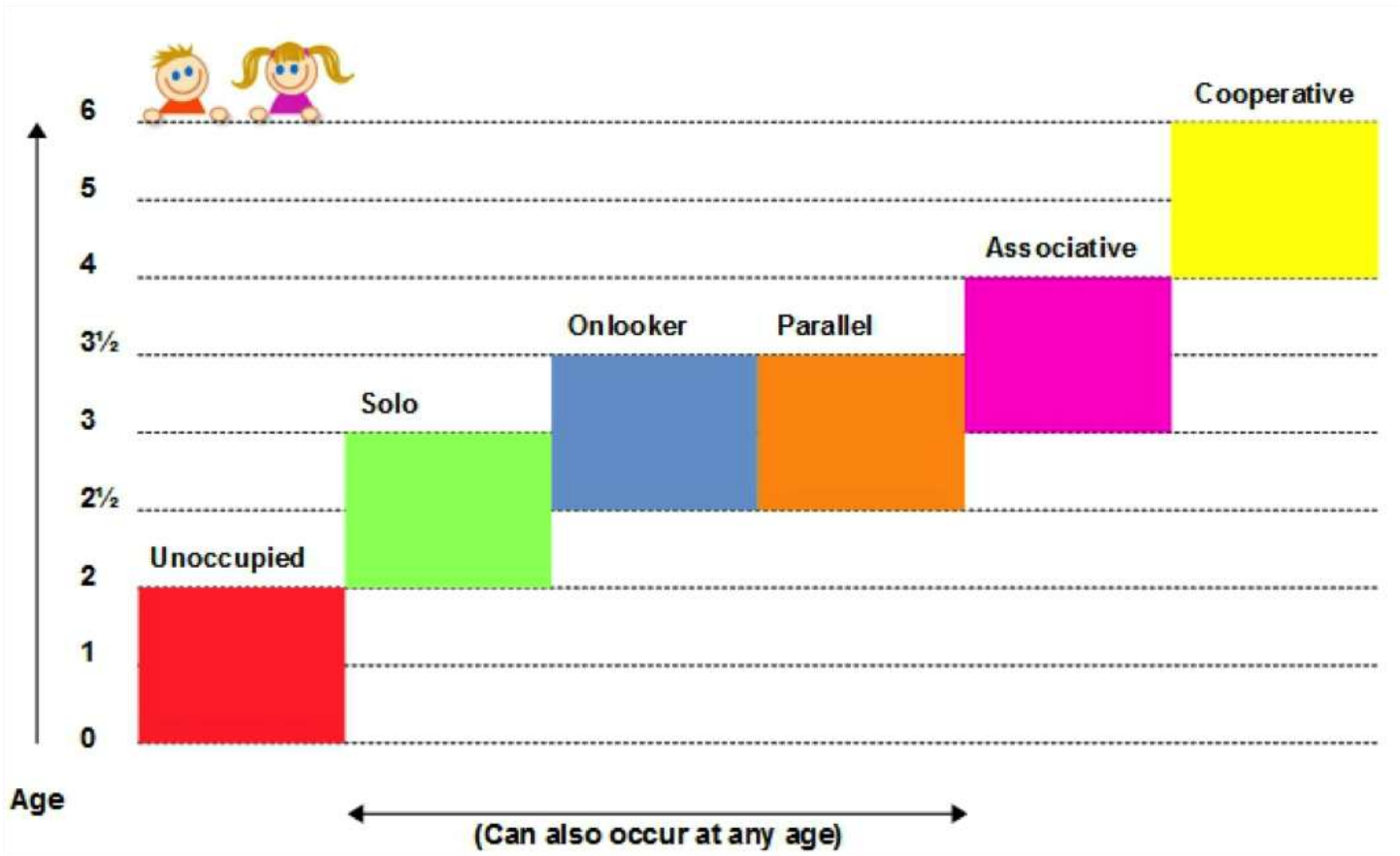
Don't forget we will close for February Half Term on February 14<sup>th</sup> ( Valentine's Day for those of you planning something special!!) There will be an After School Club that day. We will then re-open on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2020, with business as usual.

**Staff News...** I am sorry to tell you Silvana will be leaving us at Half term, as she is going to change direction in her career. Silvana has been here for 6.5 years and we are very sorry to lose her, however she feels ready for a change. Her Key Children have been reallocated to other staff and you will be notified (if you don't know already!) Silvana will continue to help us in Breakfast club until we can sort a replacement. Also Lauren has decided to work closer to home, in a day nursery which is all year round so she will also be leaving us in the middle of March. We are in the process of recruiting staff to replace both of these lovely ladies and will then speak to you if your child will have a new Key Person. I am sure you are with us all in "Thanking" them for all their hard work but wish them all the best for the future.

**Preschool...** I wanted to share with you some important aspects of Group Play for Children and how play is a natural mode of learning particularly for the youngest children.

### **Types of play**

Theories of play acknowledge that the play experience changes as a child grows and develops. Thus individuals who participate in group play with children of different ages will have different expectations and may thus be expected to react to the experience in different ways. Sociologist Mildred Parten studied children's play in the 1930s, and the six phases of play she identified (see Figure 1.1) still provide practitioners with a useful means of describing and categorising different forms of play, as well as offering some useful evidence about a child's developmental progress. In Preschool and indeed in After school club practitioners observe these different stages of play.



Up to two years of age, 'unoccupied play' is largely isolated and sensory. At this time the child, who may often seem somewhat passive, is gathering important benchmark information and experiences which will later be deployed in more active play.

From around the age of two, young children begin to use 'solo play' as a form of entertainment. Even though they're in a group setting, they may appear unaware of other playmates.

Just before 3 'Onlooker play' commonly emerges. Children will observe others playing, and may talk about what is happening in the play, but make no effort to actively participate. 'Parallel play', usually occurs at much the same time as onlooker play, as a side-by-side activity which may involve mimicry and choosing similar toys. Though there is no communal engagement, this is an important precursor to fully interactive play.

From three, play becomes more overtly social as the child joins with others in 'associative play'. At this stage children engage, communicate, and begin the process of learning how to negotiate and get on with each other.

By four, children are usually ready to begin 'cooperative play' which can involve acting together as a team, showing deeper interest in their peers, striving towards a common goal, and joy of being social, with group initiatives defining late-stage early years children.

As with all elements of child development, these play phases can appear earlier or later, and as the above graphic also notes, some types of play may persist and recur at any age. Nevertheless, the important point is that any seemingly homogeneous preschool group engaging in group play together will almost certainly contain children whose play will be at different phases. Parten (1932)

Children's play is much more complicated than this and further models of Sociometric analysis and Social relationships within groups, of which you could read here <https://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk/group-play-children/> if you are interested.

With the support of trained Practitioners' and adults, observing and tuning in the childrens' needs, children within Early Year settings have opportunity to move through these types of play and be ready for co-operative learning. They hone their social skills and are able to become independent.

**Forest School...** If your child is attending Forest School, please make sure they have wellies that fit with them every week and appropriately warm clothes.

**Toileting/ Nappies...** Please make sure you provide wipes and Nappy cream every day. If your child is moving on in their toilet training and you feel they are ready (see Eric checklist for advice <https://www.eric.org.uk/when-to-start-potty-training> ), please speak to us also to share ideas and have advice.

**Junk Modelling...** We would love you to bring in empty packaging, any old craft things, any bottle tops and interesting items.

**Understanding Children & Young People's Mental Health...** It was really great to see so many of you interested in this course and I myself am excited about this opportunity! The two dates for induction at the moment are 24<sup>th</sup> (Monday) and 26<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday), at 1.00 at Preschool. As we will be running our normal preschool sessions, and Staff also need to be inducted we will not be able to accommodate looking after your children, so if this is a problem you could either make other arrangements, wait until we book an evening induction or speak to me about it.

Please can you ensure you bring along the following so that you are able to be inducted on to your course quickly and smoothly:

- Copy of I.D (Passport/Driving Licence/Birth Certificate)
- N.I. Number
- Wage Slip (Essential - This allows us to determine how much funding can be drawn down for each learner, meaning extra support can be provided)
- If you're aged 19-23, please provide evidence of a previous Level 2 qualification - This can be anything from 5 GCSE grades A\* - G or any other vocational qualification recognised at Level 2 - i.e NVQ/A Levels, etc.

**The induction will take 90 minutes and will be carried out as follows:**

- Introduction & explanation to course

- A very basic 10 minute initial English & Maths assessment, this is an essential requirement and must be attempted by all learners - there is no fail or pass, this is simply a compulsory assessment to qualify for the course.
- All paperwork to be completed, including information such as personal details; where certificates will be sent upon completion, point of contact for help, tutor support and so on
- Full qualification to be explained and how to submit work
- Following on from this, you will get 6 weeks to complete the course, which starts from the induction date.

**After School Club...** Following on from my letter to Parents/ Carers on Monday this week, I must say things have improved. It has been really good to talk to so many of you, so thank you if you have taken the time to either come in and speak to me, personally, or to email both your support and concerns. Even the next day I noted the children arrived from school in a much calmer way.

We have said there will be no Xbox for the time being and the majority if the children have cheered. I think it has been apparent that with the numbers of children in the Hive, the sensory overload with noise, the games and anticipation, have not been conducive to enabling the children to feel calm.

We will continue to monitor this and if you have ideas you would like to discuss with myself or staff please feel free. I have asked Botley Bridges( a local charity), about providing a short training event on pre-teen children and self-regulation. I have attended an excellent course on “Emotion Coaching” run by Dr Janet Rose and am aiming to put together some resources to share with you on this subject.. so watch this space!!

As usual, if you have any concerns or would like to discuss anything further please feel free to contact me.

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