

Newsletter January 2012

Happy New Year, we hope that this year brings you great joy

Welcome back to all our parents and children. We hope you had a lovely, relaxing holiday.

New Parents and children

To all of our new parents, we hope you will have a long and happy time with us at Rainbow Montessori School. Please note that our handbook can be downloaded from our website www.rainbowmontessorischool.co.za, under 'policies'. The last page must be signed and returned to the office as soon as you have read the handbook, i.e. before your child starts at our school. From January 2012, one of our preschool classes was closed as we did not have sufficient applicants to keep 3 classes open. We opened another 6-9 class and therefore now have 2 x 6-9 classes. The staff in the 6-9 classes are going to be working together for the first year or for 6 months and then the class will be split into two individual classes.

3 year cycle/High school

Please remember that from preschool onwards it is very important that each child finishes the 3 year cycle in each class. We are obviously trying to get our children to stay in the system instead of training them for the other schools in the area. If you cannot keep your child in the system, please make sure that your child completes the cycle of work in that class. This year we have 2 children in the next cycle of work i.e. 12-15 year old cycle. We are very excited and are looking for premises for our high school children. We are hoping that this year premises will be found. We need parents and children who believe in the Montessori system and are dedicated to help us to achieve our goal of a Montessori High School.

PTC/Class reps

We have a group of dedicated parents on our Parent Teacher Council. These people have monthly meetings to help the school raise funds to improve our school. They have raised funds for the covered area on the side of the school. Class reps are important for each class; they receive a phone list and let parents know what the next fundraiser will be. We would like 2 class reps from each class; to help with concerts and other fundraising ideas.

This year we will be doing calendars again with important dates, children's birthdays, dates of outings, and dates for outreach, information mornings and lots more. Of course each calendar comes with a photo of your child's class. The cost of the calendar is R40.

Playground

We have put grass seed onto our play ground during the holidays. It is growing but it is taking time to germinate and become strong. The preschool children will be playing on the green belt until further notice. All due care and attention will be given at all times while the children are playing on the green belt. All the teachers and assistants will be on duty when the children are playing there.

Independence

One of our aims is to develop independence in your child. Please help us and your child in this regard allowing them to carry their own bags. They also need to walk into the school. Children become more independent when they use the stop and drop system.

Stop and drop

From preschool onwards all children MUST use the stop and drop system. We have 3 staff members on duty from 7.30 a.m. in different areas of the car park; please drive to the furthest staff member to the out sign...The staff member will wait until a car stops; they will either open the door or wait for the child to open the door and then help them out of the car. If you wish to have a conversation with one of the staff, please make an appointment to talk to the staff member. Conversations on the car park hold other parents up and they may need to move very quickly. Toddler parents may walk their child in; please park carefully and walk your child across the car park. Some of our older Toddlers are already using the stop and drop system. It is important to get your child used to the stop and drop system as soon as possible.

Staff

We have the best staff in this area. They are dedicated, passionate people and they want the very best for your child. No doubt some of you will know that Roxanne is pregnant; Esme is also pregnant. Roxanne will be having her baby in April and will be on maternity leave for the second term. Esme will be having her baby in June and will be on maternity leave for the third term. Christine will be covering their leave while these members of staff are away.

You may have seen a new face in aftercare working with Roxanne; her name is Dawn Graham who has officially started with us from January this year. The numbers have increased in aftercare with our older children over a period of time and I decided to employ another person to help Roxanne. I am sure that Dawn will have a long and happy time with us at Rainbow Montessori School.

Thank you

Thank you to the Warrington family for the compost for the grass and the straw for the animals. A huge thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Warrington for applying the compost on to the grass during the holidays.

Food

Last year we asked parents to abide by the rules in our handbook regarding food. It is very important that your child gets a healthy balanced diet that includes healthy breads or crackers (if there is intolerance to wheat) or a protein with salad/vegetables and pieces of fresh fruit. It is also important that children drink plenty of fluids such as water or natural juice diluted with added water. If your child has yoghurt in their lunch box, please provide a spoon. All containers must have your child's name on it. If you wish your child to eat cereal in the morning before 7.55 a.m. please provide a spoon, milk etc.

Provisions

Toddlers & Pre-school

2 x 500g Provitas

*1 spread

2 toilet rolls

Aftercare and holiday care

1 x 500g Provitas

1 x toilet paper

*1 x spread

All primary children

2 x toilet paper

***Due to life threatening nut allergies – No peanut butter or nuts of any kind will be allowed in the Toddler or Pre-school classes. Thank you for your co-operation.**

All peanut butter that was sent this term will be return to you. Spread idea – Melrose, Honey, Bovril, Marmite, Sugar free jam, fish paste, tahini (sesame seed paste), sandwich spread etc.

Uniforms

All uniforms must have your child's name on each piece of clothing/shoes/socks, including under wear. Please make sure your child wears the correct uniform and that it is clean and tidy at all times.

Spare clothes

All children MUST have at least a full set of spare clothes which stays in their bags.

Lockers

Each child has a locker the size of the locker is 30cms, please make sure that the school bag does not exceed this size.

School Bags

The school sells bags which are the correct size for the lockers. Primary school bags should be either navy blue or black please. All bags should be able to fit into the lockers, which are 30 cms. No bags on castors are permitted; unfortunately they do not fit into our lockers.

Face cloths

Each preschool child should have 2 face cloths for the week, every Friday they will be sent home to be washed.

Hats/Sun block

Please make sure that your child has a sun hat. The primary children must wear a school hat. All children should have sunblock applied in the warm summer months. The school has a supply of sun block that will be applied before the children go outside. If your child has a sensitive skin; you may provide your child with his/her own sunblock. Please make sure that this is marked with your child's name.

Most of these items appear in our handbook. To our existing parents; I am sorry for so much repetition.

School camp

The primary children will be going on a camp to Simonsberg Christian Centre from 1 February to 3 February. It is compulsory for all the primary children to attend this camp. It is important that every child attend as they bond with the teachers and of course the other children. Also, most importantly, they have so much fun.

Outings

All preprimary classes have outings once a term.

What are we doing this term:-

Toddler class (Jeanne, Selina and Constance)

A warm welcome to all children and parents and especially to the new children joining our class this term: Annah, Grace, Vaughn, Lily-Rose, Jude, Jordan and Xena. We wish you a smooth settling-in period. Themes this term will include: Summer, Valentine's Day and Domestic Animals. Please remember to apply sunblock before school. We will re-apply to arms and faces just before outside time in case it gets rubbed or washed off. Thank you.

Monique's class (Monique and Lieza)

Welcome to a year of great expectations! A warm welcome to all our new classmates from Tammy and Jeanne's classes. A few general reminders: Please send a fruit daily for snack time. Communication books are also to be at school daily please. Our theme is all about seasons this term which will include colours and textures. Our outing will be to Butterfly World on 20 March, more details to follow closer to the date. We will have parent meetings at the end of the term. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to speak to us.

Esme's class (Esme and Michelle)

Welcome back after a well deserved break. A special welcome to Kate, Josh, Christiaan, Luca, Ethan, Skyla, Elle, Elijah, Shan-Ian and Zané. Our theme for this term is The 7 Continents. Feel free to send any news about our continents to school. Our outing will be on Friday the 9th of March, and we will be going to the Tygerberg Nature Reserve. Please remember to send communication books and fruit to school everyday. A special welcome to Michelle, we look forward to a happy and fun filled year.

6-9 class (junior primary) Erika, Ginnie, Carissa and Tammy)

We would like to welcome all our new primary pupils who moved up from pre-school as well as those who joined our school. We have all started with the "time line" and are all very excited to learn more about our world and where we fit into it! We look forward to our Camp and an exciting term.

9-12 class (senior primary) (Nic and Roxanne)

Welcome back to our grades 4 – 7s. We are in a new classroom and have begun a new grade and are looking forward to a year of learning, investigating and building on what we already know. We are starting the year with a camp and aim for a genuine sense of teamwork developing in 2012.

Extra Mural Art

We now have 3 classes on a Tues to cater for 3 different age groups. (3 – 6 years; Grades 1 – 3 and Grade 4 – 7). We still have spaces available in the 3-6 year class and the Grade 4 – 7 class. For information on our classes this term, have a look at the program on the notice board. Enrolment forms available in the office.

NOTES FROM PTC (Parents Teachers Council) CHAIRMAN TIM BRUCE

The role of the PTC

The PTC is the link between parents and staff. We will gladly help resolve queries or problems. Parents are welcome to contact us if they so wish.

The PTC is also responsible to raise funds for additions or activities in the school to enhance your child's learning experience. Our aim last year was to raise R60 000, which we did. With this money we erected a covered stoep on the south side of the school which may be used for extra-mural activities or as play area in wet weather. The aim this year is to raise R100 000. There are several projects we would like to undertake but suggestions from parents are always welcome.

PTC Members

The parents and that serve on the PTC are Tim Bruce (chairman); Christine Clark (head mistress); Syda Greyling (finances); Emilia Smuts (secretary); Mercia J van Rensburg

Lynn Risi; Zita Tardrew; Berni Neveling and Yvette Palm. Parents wanting to contact the PTC may get their contact details from the school office.

PROBLEMS WITH NUTS AND PEANUTS

We have two children in the toddlers class and pre-school class that have a severe allergy to peanuts and tree nuts. The PTC has agreed with the school that all nuts, peanuts and nut butters will be prohibited in the pre-school and toddlers classes. Even though these children sit at separate tables during snack time and lunch time, it is impossible to erase all traces of nuts in the classroom. We apologise to parents for this, but until we have another effective solution, we have no choice but to ban these foods. If your child loves his black cat sandwich, look on the bright side: you have a powerful tool to bribe him with...

ACTIVITIES

We are planning a number of really enjoyable activities for the family. Those in the first term includes a special dress-up day for St Valentines, where children may dress as any movie character; the Walkathon which children love and surprise us every year with their tenacity and a Sports Day which will be held on a Saturday so that the whole family can enjoy the morning (date to be announced).

TRAFFIC JAM AT PICK UP TIMES

We have been experiencing quite heavy traffic at pick-up time with cars that inevitably pile up in the road in front of the school. This should be alleviated once the extra-mural activities are in full swing. We have however received complaints from neighbours who cannot get out of their driveways at peak traffic. Parents are urged to be considerate both of neighbours and others waiting to pick up (or drop) their children. Please do not to park your car in front of the entrance (especially when others are waiting), but rather move along so that more cars may stop in the parking area and not block the road. If your child is not yet at the gate, please circle around and join the queue again. Children's that are waiting can then be picked up and this should alleviate the traffic jam.