**Welcome to the Autumn term .. the weather feels definitely blustery this week!**

With that in mind, can we please remind you of the following:

\*Appropriate clothing and footwear including labels

There have been plenty of wry comments on the door this week as we haven’t been asking about suncream (unsurprisingly!) but we have had several children arriving without raincoats! Just to remind you, we do go outside in all kinds of weather and so your child will need to be appropriately dressed.
In wetter weather, most children have wellies which they leave at nursery (if you need some, there are a few pairs in the swap and share shed). It can also be helpful to have a pair of slippers or light plimsolls to wear indoors. These can be left at nursery.

Our younger children like to have the ‘all in one’ wet weather suits, if your child has grown out of theirs then we are happy to have them donated to us.

It is really important that all items are clearly labelled with your child’s name so that property can be returned to the correct owner! We are gathering some lost property in the nursery porch – please claim anything you recognise!

\*Swap and share

Moving towards the more Autumnal and Wintery weather, a few parents have asked about ‘hand me down’ coats and boots – if you have any, please hang them neatly in the ‘swap and share’, we don’t need any more summer wear or toys at the moment. If there are items in the swap and share that you would like please help yourself!

\*Dates for your diary

\*Term dates

The dates for this academic year are as follows:
Autumn term funding (14 weeks) 4/9/23 to 15/12/23
Half term week 23rd October to 27th October
Christmas holidays 18th December to 5th January
Spring term funding (11 weeks) 8/1/24 to 29/3/24
Half term week 12th to 16th February
Easter holidays 29th April to 12th April
Summer (13 weeks) 15/4/24 to 19/7/24
Half term 27th May to 31st June
Summer holidays start 22nd July

\*Parents evening dates

This term there will be a full parents evening on Tuesday 14th November, please mark the date in your diary. We will be giving you the opportunity to book appointments in the next week or so. This will be an opportunity for you to chat with your child’s key person, talk about what they are enjoying at Blue Door and share with us anything you are worried about. It will also be a chance for you to chat to Lois about your child’s sessions and ask any questions or enquire about any changes for the next academic year.

\*Funding

There has been much in the press about the new funded sessions coming for 2 year olds in April next year and the subsequent roll out to younger children in the future. We would like to invite you to a brief presentation about these proposed changes and how these will impact Blue Door. We plan to have this meeting at nursery during the week beginning 6th November. Exact day and time will be confirmed next week and you will be notified. Hopefully, by then we will have been given some information by East Sussex Local Authority – currently we do not know our funding rates. The aim of the presentation will be to give you as much indication as we possibly can of how we intend to offer the funded hours at Blue Door.

\*Booking sessions for next year

I know that we say this every year … but every year people are disappointed! If you are thinking of changing your sessions, increasing the number of hours that your child does or you have a friend who is looking to send their child to Blue Door – these need to be booked in asap. Many sessions are already full for the next academic year.

\*Lois’ hours

Our new office manager has settled quickly into the Blue Door routine and I know many of you have already talked to her in person, on the phone or via email. Lois works all day on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesday and then shorter hours on a Thursday and Friday. If you want to book in to chat to Lois about the funding, about your invoice or anything please email her in the office

\*Drop off and pick ups

Can we please remind parents that the nursery staff shifts are carefully planned so that we are legally compliant in terms of rotas and safeguarding. If you arrive early for your session you will be asked to wait until staff are ready to receive your child. If you are late, you will be charged a late pick up fee.

\*Stay and Play after October 1/2 term

Our very popular 'stay and play' sessions will resume after October half term, we want to give our children time to start and feel settled in their new groups before we bring more adults into the nursery. The first session will be Thursday 2nd November 1.45 - 2.30. All are welcome!

\*Themes for this term

Our nursery themes until Christmas are as follows:
September = Big and Small
October = Houses and Homes
November = Light and Dark
December = Special People

You will notice how the activities and games the staff plan with the children are loosely linked to these themes. We will be sending you some ideas through Tapestry of things you can do at home with your children to help develop their understanding ... and of course have fun in the process! We'd love to see photos of what you get up to.

\*Parents visiting for reading

Last year we had several parents come and visit the Lions' children to read or tell stories, the children absolutely love hosting visitors so if you or a relative would like to come and give us a 10-15 minute story time that would be amazing. If you have stories from other cultures and countries then the children would be fascinated to hear about them. Our children love stories from books .. or stories that you tell from memory ... they just love stories! Please let us know if you can visit.

\*Toys from home

We are seeing an increasing number of toys from home coming into nursery .. unfortunately this creates problems for us as children often are reluctant to put them away or let others see and touch them. We completely understand that for some children having a comforting toy from home to ease the transition from home to nursery is really important and we will always support this - but we are having a lot of toys just 'to show' people. If your child doesn't need the toy for comfort, please can you leave it at home? Thank you

Phew .. that's a lot! Have a lovely weekend everyone!