

# Early Years News

SPRING 2009

For parents, carers and childcare providers in Portsmouth

[www.portsmouth.gov.uk](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk)

## Play up Parents

**Early learning matters. The skills and attitudes that children develop in their pre-school years have a big impact on their later success.**

Pre-schools, playgroups and nurseries have an important part to play- but parents are even more important.

While you are talking with your children, playing games or just having fun together, you are building their confidence and understanding in all areas of learning.

The Play Development Project is run by the Portsmouth Pre School Learning Alliance (PLA). The project, run by a team of play workers, who visit families in their home and lead play sessions, aims to encourage parents to bond with their children through play in order to improve early learning and social mobility.

PLA also run a number of drop-in groups throughout the city. The groups have been set up to bring new play ideas and learning opportunities associated with play.

Hayley Gains, senior development worker, said: "Playing with your child can sometimes be a challenge. The Play Development Project can relieve stress and enhance the bond between parent and child."

For more information about the project, or if you are interested in accessing the service, contact PLA on 9266 1227 or speak to your health visitor.

## Back to school

**Over 90 adults from across the region went back to school this term but luckily for them it was playtime all day at the Portsmouth Play Festival.**

Playworkers, early years practitioners, childminders and volunteers all came together for a day of workshops and talks on the subject of play.

Bob Hughes, play theorist, opened the festival which was held at Medina Primary School. He explored some of his thoughts on play and how the theories surrounding it are important to its future development.

Sarah McCarthy-Fry MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools and Learners, closed the free festival. She said "It all looked great fun. I used this opportunity to say thank you to everyone who works with young children.

"Through play, in a secure environment children practice and build up ideas, learn to understand the need for rules, think imaginatively and communicate with others, all skills that will stand them in good stead as they progress through school."

This is the first joint play festival to take place between Portsmouth early years and childcare service and Hampshire early education and childcare unit, which has proven extremely successful and well received from the play professionals attending.



## SNAPSHOT

**\*\*\* STOP PRESS \*\*\***

Launch dates for three new children's centres

Portsmouth Children's Centre - 2 April  
Medina satellite centre - 23 April  
Highbury satellite centre - 7 May

There will be plenty of activities, taster sessions, information stalls and more. Look out for flyers and posters on each event.

### A very merry Christmas party

Over 90 people attended Cumberland Children's Centre's first Christmas party last term. Parents and children enjoyed Yoga Bugs demonstrations, face painting, making reindeer food, popcorn and fruit kebabs, Christmas craft activities and Nolan the Christmas elf's magic show.

### Family fun day

Stamshaw Children's Centre is having a free fun day at Stamshaw Junior School from 10am-3pm on Thursday 16 April. Activities will include a storyteller, gym sessions, the library service and more.

For more information contact the centre on 9263 9728.





## Playing in Pompey

**Children at early years settings in Portsmouth are encouraged to play both inside and outside all year round from babies upwards.**

They will have regular exploring sessions involving paints, glue, pens, water, sand and other messy play resources.

Please make sure that your child is wearing suitable clothing so they can access all the learning and play experiences offered to them:

- coats, hats and gloves in cold weather
- sun hats and sun cream
- appropriate outdoor footwear
- clothes that do not inhibit their movements
- suitable clothing for messy play

Play is a key theme running throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS, which sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five years old, is statutory for all childminders, nurseries including pre-schools as well as reception year classes within schools.

## Play Safe

**Child Safety Week takes place this term from 22–28 June 2009.**

Over 2 million children are harmed in accidents each year– and this can often happen during play. Many of these accidents could be prevented and children's safety needs to be on the agenda of everyone caring for children.

The majority of toys in the UK are very safe and most accidents happen when a child gets hold of a toy intended for an older child, or tripping over discarded toys.

By putting a few simple safety measures in, you can minimise the risks of your child having an accident during play.

**For more tips, advice and information contact CAPT (child accident prevention trust) on 020 7608 3828 or visit [www.capt.org.uk](http://www.capt.org.uk)**

### Play safe tips

- ⚠ Cot toys are great, but should be removed as soon as your baby can sit up or get on all fours as babies can strangle if they fall on the strings, or even use the toy to climb out of the cot.
- ⚠ Always check for age warning symbols. An age warning is often given if a toy has small parts that a baby or toddler could choke on.
- ⚠ Look after your children's toys, and teach them to look after them too. Most accidents that occur during play happen when children trip over their toys. Make sure no toys are left on the stairs.
- ⚠ Regularly check your children's toys, throwing away any that have broken parts.
- ⚠ Kites are great fun for toddlers, but don't leave them unsupervised! Make sure there are no power lines close by and that they can't get tangled in the strings.
- ⚠ Paddling pools should be emptied after use and turned upside down or put away.
- ⚠ Check garden toys regularly. Make sure swings and slides are solid and that the nuts and bolts are fitted properly.
- ⚠ Take a first aid course so that you know what to do in the event of an accident occurring. For further information contact:  
British Red Cross [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)  
or St John Ambulance [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk)

## Do you need to book a mobile crèche in Portsmouth?

**SureStart**

**Sure Start Heart of Portsmouth Children's Centres' Crèche Service can provide mobile creches in the Portsmouth area.**

The crèche service has a "good" Ofsted outcome and is run by experienced and qualified staff. The flexible service is delivered using guidance from the EYFS framework.

For competitive price quotes or more information contact Clare Roach, Crèche Manager on 9282 1816 or email [clare.roach@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:clare.roach@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)



### Praised by Ofsted

Ofsted has praised Rose Lodge Nursery School in Southsea for teaching children the values of multicultural society. From the age of two, children at the setting use books and costumes to learn about different cultures and religions in Portsmouth.



### Big cook, little cook

Children from Leapfrog Nursery had a great time making their own pizza at their Christmas party held at Pizza Express, Gunwharf.

While the pizzas were cooking the children and parents visited Father Christmas in his grotto. A great time was had by all with an added bonus of a delicious pizza to take home.

### Next issue out end of July 2009

EYC News is published three times a year at the end of each school term.

We would welcome jpeg photos from early years providers in Portsmouth showing what you have been up to in the Easter holidays or first half of the summer term.

Please send photos or make comments or suggestion to Katherine Hughes on 9269 5000 or email at [Katherine.Hughes@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:Katherine.Hughes@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

