

***Newsletter: Winter 2017***

It’s hard to believe but we are fast approaching the Christmas period, which seems as good a time as any to reflect on what we have been up to so far this year at Kids Like Us.

As always, the autumn term has been very busy as we welcomed new and reception aged children at both clubs. Overall our youngest children have settled well into our routines and club rules and are now fully engaged in making new friends and joining in our games and activities.

**New Faces**

As well as the new children you will may have seen some new staff faces at club this term. At Southwater Vicki and Andora have very quickly become great assets to the team every day and we are delighted to welcome back Kate, who has decided that she is better suited to working with school aged children than pre-schoolers. At Holbrook, Ella and Harvey are gaining invaluable work experience whilst studying for their A levels –their natural affinity with the children means they have become instant hits in club.

**Kids Like Us opens in Crawley**

We are delighted to announce that from January 2018 we will be opening a new club in Southgate Primary School, Crawley. This school has recently become an academy, one of the GLF group of schools, and we have been asked to provide a wraparound care club for their families. KLU will replace a very small school-run club and Chloe Marsh, our supervisor at Holbrook, has taken on the challenge of getting the new club up and running and developing a thriving and exciting club. Stepping into her shoes at Holbrook will be Kirsty Cope who has been with us for two years and is looking forward to leading the team there. Chloe will be leaving Holbrook at the end of term.

**Activities**

As you may be aware we have a weekly programme of themed activities at Kids Like Us, which means that those children who attend frequently have a varied menu of arts and crafts, visits and activities. In the coming weeks the children have lots to look forward to: Harry Potter week is coming up complete with some magical crafts and activities, and advent calendars are beginning to be made ready for our December countdown when the glitter will come out of hiding and we will capture the children’s Christmas excitement in a flurry of festive craft!

**Can you Help?**

Kirsty at our Holbrook club does a fantastic job planning our weekly activities and putting together role play boxes which we share between the two sites – current boxes include vets, builders, hospital and space station. If you think you might have some resources, dressing up or old uniform pieces that you think might fit well into other role play resources please let us know and we can see if we can integrate them into new boxes.

The children are love it when we have visitors to club. If you have a hobby, skill or job that you would be happy to share with the children, please mention it to a member of the team.

**Fundraising News**

As many of you already know, Kids Like Us is proud to support a local Southwater based charity known as ‘the Coco’s Foundation’. The Coco’s Foundation works in rural parts of South Africa with orphaned children to deliver each child’s basic needs: food, water, shelter and professional emotional support. The Foundation works with international companies, UK schools, community groups and many individual volunteers to help change children’s lives. They are funded entirely by donations.

At Kids Like Us, the children have recently created some fabulous personalised artwork which many of you have ordered as gifts, such as mugs, coasters and magnets. The orders have come back now, and we are thrilled with the results! Thanks to your generosity this initiative alone has raised over £330 for CoCos , which is a fantastic start to our fundraising this year!

**Absences**

Children can be absent from club for lots of reasons, but can we ask that you please let us know if your child will not be attending club for any reason, or if they are starting a regular after school club. **A call or text to the club will do the job: Southwater club 07738 935805/Holbrook club 07707 067075**.

A polite request – Kids Like Us is not a 24/7 business - our office is run from home and so calling late in the evening or at the weekend can be disturbing. If you have an enquiry outside of office hours, please email us on info@kidslikeusclubs.co.uk.

**Your Contact information**

It is important that parents remember to update us if their contact numbers change. Likewise, we do ask for other emergency contacts, in case you are delayed on your journey home and you need to make alternative collection arrangements. Please speak to a member of the team if you are unsure that your contact details are up to date.

**Mobile Phones at Club**

It is an Ofsted safeguarding requirement that personal mobile phones are not used during club sessions. Kids Like Us has a business mobile purely for parents to contact us via call or text. Staff personal mobiles are locked in a secure place during every session.

As this is a safeguarding requirement it is also extended to parents and carers who are asked not to use their mobiles whilst on our premises, so please do not be offended if we ask you to take your call outside or to switch off. If your child has a mobile phone they will also be asked to lock it into our filing cabinet for safekeeping until they leave the premises. We do all of this to ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for the children in our care.

**Kids Like Us on Facebook**

Don’t forget that Kids Like Us is now active on Facebook! This is a great way for us to provide reminders and share some lovely pictures of your children enjoying themselves. Please feel free to give our page a ‘like’ to receive regular updates and useful information.

We have some new reviews on our Facebook page and would like to thank everyone who has left one for their positive comments. We always welcome feedback and would love to see some more reviews if anyone has a spare few minutes to hand.

That only leaves us to thank you for continuing to choose Kids Like Us to look after your children, and although a little early, to wish you all a very Happy Christmas!



Best Wishes

**Jenny, Graham & Kids Like Us Team**

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