

News from the Blue Group

March 2016!

News & Events:

- ❖ **Christmas celebrations:** Santa's visit
- ❖ **Talking about Vietnam:** A Water puppet show
- ❖ **Vietnamese Tet celebrations:** Annual Lion / Dragon dance very exciting!
- ❖ See all on page 2!

Dear parents,

Welcome back to the second newsletter of this 'school year'. The children who joined us in September and October have become settled and are very much part of our group. New friendships are forming, and existing ones are becoming more intense as children are becoming more aware of each other's feelings and needs. They start to plan games together with their own rules and learn to play according to their rules. They also learn to solve problems when a rule doesn't work, a friend doesn't agree or even has a better idea.

Play dates

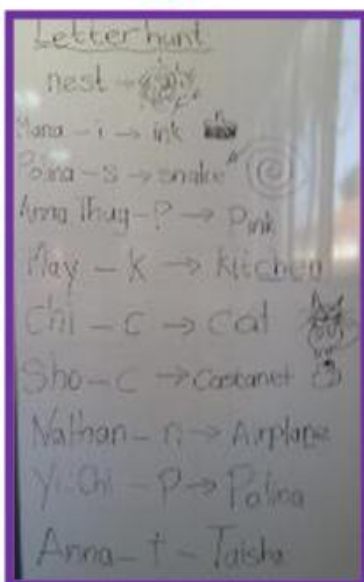
The children also like to play together after school and arrange this together, with a little help from the teacher to establish contact between parents. Play dates are an important part for children to further establish friendships and their social skills. Every day children talk about their experiences in their play, how much fun they had together, and how they involved 'new' friends around their play area. This builds new confidence and a deeper sense of self in what role they play in these activities. Teachers help establish contact between parents but do not actively get involved in arranging dates. Just let us know if your child should have a play date and whether he / she is going home with another parent or caretaker.



Jolly Phonics

Every week the children learn the sound of a new letter, its shape, and a song. We practice the letters by organizing a 'letter hunt' at times.

We hide letters throughout the class room and the children search for them. They then come to the mat and each child thinks of a word beginning with that letter, or the letter is in the word. At times we give hints or we show the movement that goes with the letter. Over time the children learn to find different words, and recognize similar letters in other words around the class room.



This also happens when they look into books and point the letters out. This is how children build reading skills and enjoy the excitement of learning new letters.

Homework

In January we had another homework assignment. This was for the theme 'Places I have been to in Vietnam'. The results were fantastic and the children had a great time telling the stories behind each photo. What was nice to see was that some photo's were from when the children were younger. They remembered parts of those events, but great to hear was the past tense in which the children spoke correctly: "This is when I was 2", and so on. This activity is another great way to build up language skills.

All collages are hanging in the book corner in our class, and often the children sit there and talk to each other about the pictures they see and what they were doing then. The children learn to listen to each other, explain situations or actions and to tell details clearly. This also gives a sense of pride, showing friends about themselves, telling their story. You are most welcome to come and have a look!

Everyone enjoyed talking & listening to each other



Activities & Events in the Blue Group

Santa came to visit the Blue Group!

On 18 December Santa came to visit and he looked slimmer than the year before! Santa shook hands with everyone personally and then decided to sit on the floor together with the children. They asked questions such as where his tummy had gone, why he wore such a long beard and how old he was. Santa told the children he had to do exercises as he was getting too fat, and yes, he was very old, that's why he wore such a long beard. After singing some Christmas songs together Santa gave out presents for everyone. The children were very happy!

After saying goodbye to Santa the children played with their toys. When it was time for the buffet the children lined up and tried food from each dish. The food looked good and was great to eat! We set up the class in 'restaurant style'. And the children enjoyed the different set up and chose where to sit with friends and chatted about their given presents and what they would do with them.



The water puppet show!

In our theme 'Talking about Vietnam' we talked about traditions and one tradition is a water puppet show that shows stories and myths from the past in Vietnam. We organized a trip to the water puppet show next to the Saigon Zoo and it was very interesting! The children discovered that the puppets were moved by long sticks and that people behind the screen did this. All children liked different parts of the six stories that were shown.



Yearly Lion & Dragon dance!

The Lion & Dragon dance at SmartKids Tran Ngoc Dien was a great success again! Before we went to see the show, the children discussed what they would go and see. They told each other that there would be people "pretending to be the lion" and "people hold sticks to carry the dragon". They talked about how they saw 'legs sticking out' and that they were 'not scared'. The show was quite entertaining with lots of acrobatics and the children were encouraged to be part of the show. Later the dragon appeared and then it was time to pose for pictures.

Chuc

Mung

Nam

Moi!



Thank you for your support and hope you enjoyed reading this letter! Next & last News letter will be in June!

Ms. Monique & Ms. Shendie