

August 2021

Dear Parents,

Well here we are in the last week of term, the worst week of the year for us as we have to say goodbye to our Oranges & Lemons leaving for school. It is always such mixture of sadness and pride, some of these little faces we have loved since they were babies and now they are off on their next adventure as confident, clever, happy big boys and girls. We know they will all do well at school, and we are so proud of them. We will try to keep up the 'it's so exciting!' front when saying goodbye, but we will certainly be having a few tears afterwards!

We have really enjoyed getting into the swing of the 'new rules' and it has been lovely to have parents back into the building, we are sure your little ones have enjoyed showing Mummy and Daddy where to go and what they do every day. We also loved having Lounge Lizards back at last, the children were amazed by the animals and we were amazed by how brave they all were holding them.



Oranges & Lemons also really enjoyed their Forest School Day (Bananas are having theirs today, unfortunately weather not quite as good...!). They did leaf printing with hammers (with supervision!), shadow drawings, a pollen hunt, den building, perfume making, nature painting, salt dough hedgehogs and flower crowns – a busy but fun day.



We all enjoyed our focus week for Understanding the World, all of the rooms did so many different activities focussed on learning about the world, people and communities, but special mention has to go to Bananas for their Bee Day which was fabulous, we are sure the Bananas children will all be little environmentalists after that.



As we go on to the next year, we will also sadly be saying goodbye to some staff as well as our school leavers. Tara is leaving to pursue a career as a Child Protection Social Worker, and Leonie is joining Belvedere Preparatory School. Olivia is also reducing to part time as she pursues a paramedic course. We are so proud of all of them and support them in their new adventures, but will of course miss them at Monkton.

So, we have some new staff joining us. I had hoped to have photos but I'm not quite that organised so that will have to wait until the next newsletter. Bananas parents will now have already met Wendy, she has a Degree in Education Support and a wealth of experience having been a Deputy Manager at her previous setting. She has already formed lovely relationships with children and staff alike and we are sure will be a great asset to Bananas.

Sharon will be joining us in September, she has her Level 3 in Childcare and also has a huge amount of experience having been Head of Room in her previous setting. She also has additional qualifications in Makaton. She has a lovely bubbly personality and we are sure she will settle in quickly.

We will also be welcoming Emmot back to Monkton... she and her siblings came to Monkton as children and she will now be returning as a Practitioner, which is just gorgeous. She has a degree in Early Childhood and Education, and if she's still as fun as she was when she was 5 then we are in for a treat.

Dates for the Diary

Not much coming up I'm afraid as September is our 'settling in month' with all of the transitions to next rooms and new children starting. So we will take a month to nurture and cuddle and calm, and then once everyone is settled in we will get some fun planned! We will of course still be doing our usual sessions with Wavy Davy, Coach Callum's football sessions, and Oranges & Lemons dance sessions with Movema.

Photo Days 5th, 6th, 7th October – I will remind you nearer the time but we have pencilled these days in for the photos, usually we do the group photos on the morning of the first day, and then work through the individual & sibling photos over the next days.

So that's all for now, just to leave you with some photos from Oranges & Lemons Leavers Party, when they had a ball with Wavy Davy's magic show, face painting, dancing, karaoke and a party picnic. I've also attached a poem for the leavers – I do warn you I can't get through it without a few tears but I am an emotional wreck this week so you may do better! Thank you so much for bringing your beautiful children to Monkton, it has been our absolute privilege to have them and to share in the magic of their first few years.

Lots of love to all,

Eve, Sue, Noreen, Lydia and all of the staff at Monkton xxx



*Dear Teacher,
I know you're rather busy
First day back, there's just no time
A whole new class of little ones
And this one here is mine
I'm sure you have things covered
And have done this lots before
But my boy is very little
He hasn't long turned four
In his uniform this morning
He looked so tall and steady
But now beside your great big school
I'm not quite sure he's ready
Do you help them eat their lunch?
Are you quick to soothe their fears?
And if he falls and hurts his knee
Will someone dry his tears?
And what if no-one plays with him?
What if someone's mean?
What if two kids have a fight
And he's caught in between?
You're right, I have to leave now
It's time for him to go
I'm sure he'll learn so much from you
Things that I don't know
Yes, I'm sure they settle quickly
That he's fine now without me
I know he has to go to school
It's just so fast, you see
It seems like just a blink ago
I first held him in my arms
It's been my job to love, to teach
To keep him safe from harm
So, when I wave goodbye in a moment
And he turns to walk inside
Forgive me if I crumple
Into tears of loss and pride
I know as I give him one more kiss
And watch him walk away,
That he'll never again be wholly mine
As he was before today.*

*Dear Parent,
I understand that you are scared
to wave your child goodbye
and leave him in a teacher's hands
don't worry if you cry!
I'm used to weeping parents
It's hard to leave I know.
But it's time to share him (just a bit)
To help him learn and grow.
Let me reassure you
That I'll give your child my best
I'll wipe his tears, soothe his fears
And change his dirty vest!
If your darling child is full of cold
I'll blow their nose all day
Just like you, I'll care for them
In a special way.
I'll treat him like I would my own
I'll catch him from a fall and
If there is ANY problem
I'll be sure to tell you all.
It's true he'll grow to love us
They'll talk of school a lot
It doesn't mean they hate you
And that you should lose the plot!
I'll tell you a secret.
That when your child is here
They talk to me as much of you
Of this please have no fear.
You'll always be their mother
Whilst teachers come and go
To them you are their number one
This I truly know.
Soon you'll see some changes
In your little girl or boy
They'll become more independent
And to see this, it's a joy!
I'll teach them all I have to give
To share, climb and to write
But to you they safely will return
To tuck them in at night.*