



CRYPTIC

ACROSS:

1. Don't win palm crookedly for what was a hoax (8,3)
9. Shallow hollow reddish-brown civet found first on a Greek mountain (5)
10. Put weight on a powerless writer to produce a design from a perforated plate (7)
11. To breed you need space – and sex! (8)
12. See 18ac
14. Dish that's Middle Eastern – and not cold! (6)
15. Palm a man removed from a parasitic plant (6)
- 18,12ac. Foot, an old reformer, is holding gold. This is where the gold is (4,4)
20. A dog Machiavelli's holding left Iceland – it's what a boxer practises (8)
22. A light song with the French leaving a bar (7)
23. Get to know one whom it's pleasant to know – Newton (5)
24. Theatre with elegant cast embodying range of knowledge (7,4)

DOWN:

2. Machiavelli put solver initially in the dark – enlightenment required (7)
3. Those receiving instruction apprehended one skill – the wrong way! (8)
4. In this School a reader of hilarious teddy-bear stories got expelled (6)
5. Originally called Duke Besoin (4)
6. A soldier caught in an elbow! (5)
7. Looking for property that's singular is something following a primary action (5-6)
8. What's for a party leader? Drink, an unknown quantity, and fish. Lord! (4,7)
13. Member of the Armed Forces gets sick in a vehicle – maybe this is the cause (8)
16. "Maritime Escort" – tomorrow opening (7)
17. A poison produced by combining 3 metals (6)
19. Manage a large farm? Managed a church (5)
21. Lady leaves board champion for an old purse (4)

EASY

ACROSS

1. Emitting ionizing particles (11)
9. Body organ secreting particular chemical substances (5)
10. Support for a horse-rider's foot (7)
11. Got the better of (8)
12. Make preparations (for) (4)
14. Distinguishing characteristics (6)
15. Projection from a wall-face, supporting a weight (6)
18. System of religious devotion directed towards a particular object (4)
20. Procedure intended to improve the appearance of something (8)
22. Ring-shaped cake made with yeast, soaked in liqueur-flavoured syrup (7)

DOWN:

23. Out-growing (biology) (5)
24. Plugging (11)
2. Public walk shaded with trees (7)
3. Point out (8)
4. Seize (power, control) (6)
5. Follow closely (4)
6. Pertaining to a very small infective agent (5)
7. Belief that nothing can be known of God's existence or nature (11)
8. Shrub with slender toothed leaves and pink capsules (7,4)
13. Having no permanent place of residence (8)
16. England, Wales, Scotland and small adjacent islands (7)
17. Large white sea-bird with black-tipped wings (6)
19. Existed (5)
21. Silvery freshwater fish (4)

A BOTTLE of champagne will go to the first correct cryptic crossword solution drawn. Send your entries to Crossword Editor, Ham&High Series, FREEPOST, NW3 1YR (fax 020-7433 6229). Deadline is the Thursday following the date of publication.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION (CRYPTIC): ACROSS 1. Fair 3. Rummaged 9. Produce 10. Loafs 11. Lares 12. Manilla 13. Omniscience 17. Triumph 19. Lymph 20. Mid-on 21. Mailing 22. Stirring 23. Isle DOWN 1. Fipple 2. Isogram 4. Ure 5. Melanie Klein 6. Gnarl 7. Dismay 8. Ruislip Manor 12. Micah 14. Commies 15. Stamps 16. Chigoe 18. Indri 21. Man

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION (EASY): ACROSS 1. Lear 3. Disburse 9. Unclean 10. Cowed 11. Epode 12. Wheedle 13. Myxomatosis 17. Ingrate 19. Heeds 20. Trawl 21. Propane 22. Pleasant 23. Card DOWN 1. Lauded 2. Anchovy 4. Ion 5. Bachelorhood 6. Rowed 7. Eddies 8. Hemerocallis 12. Weave 14. Ikebana 15. Lift up 16. Ostend 18. Grave 21. Pin

Winner of Crossword No. 607  
Judith Vandervelde, Fordington Road, N6

# Watch your child from your desktop

A nursery is giving working parents a chance to log on to see their children at play



Bridget Galton

LIFESTYLE

**C**UTTING edge technology is helping hard-working parents stay in touch with their child's progress at nursery.

Mums and dads whose children attend Active Learning nursery in Crouch End can log on to webcams at work – to watch their offspring at play.

Tots at the unique private nursery in Tivoli Road are also treated to organic meals, yoga classes, tennis lessons, workshops with opera singers and science experiments.

Active Learning chairman, West Hampstead businessman Bill Zuckerman, says he will also install webcam technology in the new nurseries he is opening in Fulham in June and Compayne Gardens, West Hampstead, in September.

"Parents at work can go online with a secure log in and only have access to the rooms where their child is supposed to be. There is a



Active Learning chairman Bill Zuckerman.

Picture by Nigel Sufton

reassurance and a security element. But also, when they come home, they can ask their child about something they have seen them do that day. And if a parent is working in Hong Kong for a week, they can see what their children are up to."

Zuckerman, a former partner with Ernst&Young, realised there was a gap in the market for dynamic, well-staffed, childcare four years ago, when he started looking at nurseries for his then one-year-old daughter Arabella.

"Much of the quality of what was being provided was appalling and the demand was far outstripping the supply. There simply wasn't the kind of nursery we wanted with provision of

engaging and fun activities to stimulate and educate children."

In one nursery he visited, he saw three staff members chatting in the corner while the babies cried, ignored.

"They were unstimulated and bored. Most behavioural issues with children come through lack of attention, boredom and frustration and most existing provision is simply a safe place to put children while their parents work."

Zuckerman, who lives on Hillfield Road, set up Active Learning to offer a more creative environment and instill an early love of learning for nought to four-year-olds.

"We aim to maximise the talents and abilities of each child with a tailor-made curriculum which enables them to develop at a pace that makes sense to them."

Active Learning nurseries are laid out in "studios" with specialist teachers in dedicated, well-equipped spaces for performing arts, art, science, IT and sport. An additional sensory room can either stimulate babies or be turned into a planetarium to teach older children about the solar system.

And the arts play a huge part, with theatre groups and opera groups booked to run workshops and regular concerts given by

children. At about £320 a week it's not cheap, but Zuckerman points out that it includes four organic meals a day cooked on site, nappies and wipes, and the staffing is above government ratios – with every child assigned a mentor responsible for their pastoral care and a specialist literacy champion to help with reading and writing.

A recent Ofsted report warned that 30 per cent of nurseries were failing to teach children basic numeracy and literacy – but Active Learning was noted for good practice.

"We are at the forefront of what pre-school education should be," says Zuckerman, who rejects the "high pressure hot housing" techniques which achieve results by drumming in repetitive tasks.

"If a child is bored in education at three you have lost them. If they are stimulated to develop a love of education at an early age through activities that engage, that's a great start in life."

"Every time I hear a parent on a nursery tour say, 'I have never seen anything like it', I know we are doing something right."

Active Learning is opening two further nurseries next year in Chiswick and Kingston. For further details go to [www.active-learn.co.uk](http://www.active-learn.co.uk) or call 0800 0811620.



Grow! Toddler Jay has fun dressing up as a lion.



The nursery's baby play room.