



Windmill Pre-School
Malham Close, Flitwick, Bedfordshire. MK45 1AJ
Tel : 01525 719144 Website: www.windmillpre-school.org

INFORMATION BOOKLET
PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 2013

“WE WELCOME CHILDREN FROM 2 YEARS 9 MONTHS TO JOIN IN THE FUN OF LEARNING WITH FULLY QUALIFIED STAFF IN A CARING AND HAPPY ENVIRONMENT”

COMMITTEE/CONTACTS

CHAIRPERSON	Fran Cox
VICE CHAIRPERSON	Laura Farrugia
SECRETARY	Amanda Whitehouse
TREASURER	Wendy Yates
GENERAL COMMITTEE	Graham Farrugia, Hayley
Howkins, Samantha Inquieti, Mary Moore, Ola Tkaczyk, Sarah Wright, John McNeil	
MEMBERSHIP/ADMINISTRATOR	Debbie Fowler
PRE-SCHOOL	01525 719144

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

As a pre-school we aim to develop your child's intellectual, social, physical and emotional skills through play. We provide children with many opportunities to increase their skills and knowledge through play and through interaction with other children and adults. We are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and firmly believe in their philosophy of learning through play and parental involvement. In planning our activities, we consider and promote the learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage – a statutory framework designed to promote and support early childhood development.

POLICIES

Equal Opportunities

The members of this pre-school are committed to caring for people and want everyone to feel welcome. We will not tolerate discrimination on grounds of race, creed, class, gender, sexuality, disability or age. It is therefore our policy to challenge discriminatory behaviour or comments, whether it is amongst staff, parents, children or other users.

Behaviour Management

We believe that children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-esteem and self-discipline in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

In order to achieve this:

- Adults in the pre-school will praise and endorse desirable behaviour such as kindness and sharing
- We will take positive steps to avoid a situation in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.

Full and detailed descriptions of the following policies are available in the red folder at pre-school:

- Equal Opportunities
- Behaviour Management
- Special Needs
- Health and Hygiene
- Safety
- Admissions
- Drugs & Alcohol
- Data Protection
- Student placement
- Nutrition
- Equipment and Toys
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding Children
- Settling in
- Complaints
- Non-collection of children

WELCOME TO WINDMILL PRE-SCHOOL

We hope your child will enjoy their time with us and benefit greatly from our pre-school. Please take the time to read the rest of this booklet and complete any details we ask for at your child's registration. We have to abide by many rules and regulations as stated by the Children Act, Pre-School Learning Alliance and Ofsted. These regulations are necessary and welcomed by pre-schools to assure parents that their children are cared for at the highest level.

Our January 2013 Ofsted report found that "Children's needs are exceptionally well met because planning and assessment are rigorous and highly appropriate to their individual needs".

A complete copy of our latest OFSTED inspection report is also available to parents. Please ask if you wish to read one.

We are based on Templefield Lower School site, Malham Close, Flitwick and run sessions during the normal school terms. Our sessions are as follows:

Monday	09.00 – 12.00	12.45 – 3.15
Tuesday	09.00 – 12.00	12.45 – 3.15
Wednesday	09.00 – 12.00	12.45 – 3.15
Thursday	09.00 – 12.00	12.45 – 3.15
Friday	09.00 – 12.00	12.45 – 3.15

Additionally, our lunch club runs daily from 12.00 until 12.45.

We welcome a maximum of 20 children to each morning/afternoon session. If requests exceeds availability then the pre-school will hold a waiting list, and priority will be given to funded children to use their 15 hour entitlement. The adult/child ratio in our group is 1:5 and often 1:4. We achieve this by employing 4 staff each session and trusting in a sustaining partnership with parents. At each session, members of staff are assisted by parent/carer helpers. All staff and committee members have police checks.

The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is organised by a committee of volunteer parents, elected at the Annual General Meeting. The pre-school is self-financing.

The committee is responsible for employing the staff and managing the finances of the group. Parents on the committee do not receive payment from the group and all their work is voluntary. This means that much of their own time is spent organising the day-to-day needs of the pre-school. Consequently, they depend on, and greatly value, your support. If you have a comment, question or suggestion about anything to do with pre-school, please speak to any committee member, they will be happy to listen.

The pre-school is able to offer free places to children from the term following their 3rd birthday. Fees are paid direct to us through the Nursery Education Grant Scheme, administered by Central Bedfordshire Council.

As a registered provider of nursery education the pre-school is required to provide high quality care and education and must meet the same standards as LEA lower schools. To ensure standards are maintained we have the support of an Early Years Teacher provided by Central Bedfordshire council and are inspected by OFSTED in the same way as schools. Any further information or publications you may wish to see can be made available to you free of charge. Please see a committee member.

CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR PRE-SCHOOL

Children may start pre-school from 2 years 9 months old.

Younger non-funded children usually start by attending one or two sessions per week. Subject to availability, the number of hours may increase, as long as your child is well settled and able to cope. Please see the Admissions policy for further details. Any continence issues will be discussed on an individual basis.

A registration form must be completed before you leave your child unattended at pre-school. Not only does it include obvious items such as names and addresses, contact phone numbers, health details etc – it also asks for other important information about your child. Do they drink milk ? Are they allergic to anything ? Do they have pet-hates or fears etc ?

It has also been found by past experience that children can be affected by unusual happenings at home. A parent working away from home, domestic or family upheaval etc. We do not wish to pry into your personal affairs, but would appreciate the Pre School Manager being informed verbally if anything is directly affecting your child. Any information is treated and kept in the strictest of confidence.

FEES

The current rate for non-funded children is £ 4.00 per hour. Fees are normally charged termly and payment is expected within two to three weeks of your invoice. This payment guarantees that your child's place is held. If no payment is received and our treasurer is not informed of a delay, we are at liberty to give your child's place to another on our waiting list. If you have any problems making a payment on time, please contact the treasurer in confidence, who will attempt to make suitable arrangements for you. If your child does not attend some mornings due to sickness, holidays, etc, we cannot refund for sessions missed.

ILLNESS

As we want your child and all others attending pre-school to be fit, healthy and happy, please do not send your child if they show any signs of illness. The Pre School Manager may ask you to collect your child at any time should s/he become too ill to benefit from the session. If your child has vomiting and/or diarrhoea, please keep them away from pre-school for at least two clear days after the symptoms have subsided.

Please notify staff immediately of any infectious diseases, especially German Measles.

GETTING TO KNOW PRE-SCHOOL

On the first morning/afternoon of your child starting pre-school, please be prepared to stay and ensure that he/she is happy and comfortable with the new environment. You are under no obligation to leave if you do not feel comfortable in doing so. You are more than welcome to stay for as many sessions as you feel necessary. If you need any assistance or advice, please talk to a staff member.

If you have any queries, questions, suggestions and/or criticisms, or are at all concerned about your child, please do not hesitate to speak either to a staff or committee member. We welcome feedback and have a comments box by the pre-school entrance.

If you have any special skills, i.e. singing, dancing, playing a musical instrument, etc or have a special interest that you would like to share with the children, please approach the staff who will be only too delighted to invite you to a session to share your knowledge with the group.

KEYWORKER SCHEME

Windmill Pre-School operates a keyworker scheme where each family has a named member of staff available to give advice, information and personal attention to the needs and development of each child.

Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs; to help the child become familiar with the setting; offer a settled relationship for the child and also to build a relationship with their parents.

This includes making routine observations of children, reflecting on their current needs and development, and devising individual play plans to ensure these needs are met.

Partnership with parents throughout this process is paramount, with regular consultations and sharing of information.

All records remain completely confidential between staff and parents. As a parent, you have full access to your child's records at all times.

If you have any queries or concerns about the scheme please speak to the Pre School Manager when you visit.

CRAFT ACTIVITIES

Children have access to paint, glue and craft materials at each session.

Most children will experiment with these at their own pace, exploring their possibilities and making discoveries about what the materials can and cannot do. As skill and confidence increase they may produce something recognisable.

Whatever your child presents you with at the end of the session, please remember it is valuable for the thinking, learning and enjoyment that have gone into it and not for the end product.

A good way to boost a child's self-esteem and confidence is to take an interest in their work, talk about it and praise their efforts.

CLOTHING

Some pre-school activities are not particularly clean. While every attempt is made to keep your child clean (using plastic aprons, etc), every parent knows that children + paint or glue = mess. Please be aware of this when you dress your child for pre-school.

It is also important that clothes are "toilet friendly". When time is of the essence, dungarees, belts and buttons are often just too difficult for little fingers!

We aim to play outside on a daily basis so please send your child with appropriate outerwear. If your child comes to pre-school in wellies it is important to send a change of shoes – this is for comfort, hygiene and safety.

In the summer months your child will need a suitable sun hat. Please ensure your child wears suntan lotion in hot weather. If your child attends all day and suntan lotion needs to be reapplied, please pick up an authorisation form from pre-school.

If you wish your child to wear a protective hat for sand play, please speak to a member of staff.

COLLECTING CHILDREN FROM PRE-SCHOOL

Please collect your child promptly at the end of each session. Inform the pre-school leader if someone other than yourself will be collecting your child. We will not release the child to anyone other than a parent or carer, unless we have had prior permission from the parent/carers.

If an emergency delays or prevents you from collecting your child at the end of a session, it is essential that you telephone the pre-school as soon as possible. Normally we would wait with your child until a carer arrives, but if this is not practicable, or there is likely to be a lengthy delay, we may make other arrangements.

If you do not contact us, we will first attempt to call you, then the other contacts on your registration form. Please be advised that we are required to contact Social Services if all efforts to contact you or a representative fail.

NOTICE BOARD AND PARENTS VOLUNTARY ROTA

Please read the parent notice board for day-to-day news, items needed, help required, etc. Important news is often posted here. Posters are also displayed in our windows. Please read them regularly as they are often the quickest way to give out relevant information.

Your help is needed ! We pride ourselves on the fact that parental involvement is an essential aspect of Windmill Pre-School. Indeed, Ofsted has recognised that: 'Windmill Pre-school maintains an excellent partnership with parents. Staff and parents work closely together in providing a consistent and caring environment where children are happy and confident'. Such effective communication between staff and parents partially results from the fact that members of staff are assisted by volunteer parents/carers at most sessions.

We are extremely grateful to all parents/carers who participate in the Parents Voluntary Rota. Parents assure us that the benefits of volunteering far outweigh the sacrifice of a few hours of their time. Many parents relish this opportunity to join their child during a normal pre-school session. Being present during a pre-school session enables you not only to observe first-hand your child's developing skills and interests, but also to chat informally with your child's keyworker about your child's progress. You may find your child wishes to stay beside you for a while. This is quite natural, as it can take a little while to get used to sharing mum or dad with all the other children.

Most parents/carers volunteer for one or two sessions each term. Please sign up to help on the Voluntary Rota board displayed at pre-school. If something prevents you from being present for a session on which you have signed up, please let us know on 01525 719144 as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, staffing ratio regulations mean that a parent may not bring along any other children on mornings they volunteer to help in pre-school. We understand if parents with very young babies are not able to participate in the Voluntary Rota for a few months.

AUTHORISATION FOR PRE-SCHOOL OUTINGS

In order to take children on outings, our pre-school requires authorisation from parents. You will be advised if an outing is organised and we will also ask for your permission in advance to take your child out of the pre-school setting.

PRE-SCHOOL FINANCING AND FUND RAISING

Your fees cover rent to the school, staff salaries and insurance. Fund-raising meets all other costs for eg toys, books, equipment, paint, paper, provisions, etc.

To maintain fees at a reasonable level, we anticipate having to raise £2,000 per year through fund-raising events. We are always grateful to receive any moneymaking ideas, however novel ! Please share these with a member of the staff or committee.

We try to make fundraising activities as much fun as possible. Join us and have a laugh !

EDUCATIONAL PLAN

September 2012

Learning at Pre-school

Within Windmill Pre-school, all children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace with a flexible curriculum tailored to the needs and interests of each individual child. By means of developmentally appropriate play activities and a high level of adult input, we offer learning opportunities which meet the government's requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage [EYFS] for children from birth to the end of their school reception year.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe and is based on beliefs that;

- Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.
- Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.
- A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.
- Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

Four overarching principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional development.

Providers must also support children in four further *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world;

- expressive arts and design.

Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others.

Promoting prime areas of learning at Windmill:

Communication and language

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening and by hearing and responding to stories, songs, dance, rhymes and conversation.

Physical development

A wide range of equipment and opportunities, both indoors and outside, allows the children to gain confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their own bodily skills. Effective adult interaction and encouragement enables children to create and meet physical challenges, developing increasing skills and control in moving, climbing and balancing. At the same time, children are supported in the development of fine motor skills required to use tools, including pens and pencils, and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision. Topics encompassing health and personal awareness support children's understanding of how exercise, eating, sleeping and hygiene promote good health.

Personal, social and emotional development

Within a nurturing environment, children are individually supported in developing confidence, autonomy and self-esteem. They are encouraged to play and concentrate both independently and as part of the group, sharing and co-operating with each other and adults. Through activities, conversation and practical example, they learn acceptable ways to express their own feelings and to have respect for the feelings of others. All children are given the opportunity, as appropriate, to take responsibility for themselves, their peers and pre-school resources, fostering a sense of belonging and community.

Promoting specific areas of learning at Windmill:

Literacy

Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purpose of writing and, to use drawn and written symbols for themselves. A well-stocked book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, sharing and handling them and becoming aware of their uses as a source of information, stories and pleasure.

Mathematics

By means of adult-supported practical experience, children become familiar with the sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities, which form the basis for mathematics. As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems, children are assisted to learn and use the vocabulary of mathematics, identifying objects by shape, position, size, volume and number. Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of number sequences and, when they are ready, to use simple mathematical operations such as adding.

Understanding the world

A safe and stimulating environment allows children to explore and experience with a range of natural and manufactured materials. They learn to observe the features of objects and living things, recognising differences, patterns and similarities. Children are assisted in exploring and understanding their environment both within the group and also in the wider community. A range of safe and well-maintained equipment enables children to extend their technological understanding, using simple tools, techniques and ICT, as appropriate, to achieve their intentions and to solve problems. Multi-cultural resources and topics enable the children to gain an awareness of their own and others cultures and beliefs.

Expressive arts and design

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings. Craft equipment, including paint, glue, crayons and pencils as well as natural and recycled resources provide for open-ended exploration of colour, shape and texture and the development of skills in painting, drawing and collage. Children join in with and respond to music, dance and stories, and there are many opportunities for imaginative role-play, both individually and as part of the group.

Further information

A parents' guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage and copies of the EYFS framework documents are available to view at www.foundationyears.org.uk
If you have any concerns or queries please do speak to your keyperson.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP
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1. Children are accepted from 2 years and 9 months old to school age.
2. Any continence issues will be discussed on an individual basis.
3. Fees are due termly and should be paid within two to three weeks of receiving your invoice, unless other arrangements are made with the Treasurer.
4. Parents/Carers are asked to undertake voluntary duties each term and to offer assistance to the staff and/or committee in running fund-raising events, etc.
5. Children suffering from sickness or diarrhoea must not attend pre-school for two clear days after symptoms subside. If your child has been unwell in the night, for any reason, please do not send them to pre-school; we do not have the resources to deal with sick children and the high risk of cross infection makes it unfair to everyone attending.
6. Children must be collected promptly at the end of every session. If an alternative adult is to collect a child at any time, our pre-school staff must be advised in advance.
7. If you are going to withdraw your child from pre-school, you need to give at least 1/2 terms notice. Payment of fees will normally be required if you do not give the appropriate notice.