

# **HANHAM TODDLERS PRESCHOOL CIO**

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## **PROSPECTUS**

Notes for the Guidance of Prospective Parents/Carers

PLEASE RETAIN THIS PROSPECTUS FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

# Introduction

Hanham Toddlers Pre-school is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), formed in 1960, and is believed to be the oldest in the country. There are currently allocations for up to 4 groups distributed throughout the week at the times shown in the table below. Visits from prospective parents are welcomed between 9.30am and 10.30am during the session on Tuesday and Thursday.

We operate from both Hanham Methodist Church and Hanham Children's Centre and sessions will be allocated accordingly allowing for more flexibility to suit individual family needs.

Should your child be granted a place, notification will be given in the term preceding entry to the pre-school. There will then be an opportunity for you and your child to visit, meet the relevant Group Leader and familiarise yourselves with the staff, surroundings and day-to-day operation of the pre-school. We will also carry out a Home Visit prior to your child starting with us.

## Hours of Attendance

### Older Classes

Monday to Friday – session lengths 5 or 6 hours

### Younger Classes

Monday to Friday – session lengths 3, 4 or 5 hours

All classes must have sufficient numbers of children to be viable.

All sessions in excess of 3 hours long will require your child to bring a packed lunch supplied by you.

## The Pre-school Philosophy

The vision of the Pre-school is to provide a happy and caring environment where children learn to play, gain social skills and become confident individuals and independent learners. In order to achieve this, a long-term curriculum has been designed to be interesting and relevant to all children. The curriculum encompasses the seven areas of learning and development; three prime areas and four specific areas through the *Early Years Foundation Stage Framework* for children from birth to five as dictated by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Within this environment, children are enabled to gain confidence in the basic skills that will assist them in their transition to school.

The pre-school seeks to complement the discipline and security of the child's home. There is a 'no smacking' policy and in the event of a problem, a child will be removed, an adult will discuss the incident with them and an apology will be encouraged. Unsociable behaviour will not be accepted and any such incidents are suitably dealt with. Hanham Toddlers Pre-school provides a smoke free, caring environment where positive behaviours and individual achievements are recognised and acknowledged.

## Admissions

It is our intention to make our pre-school genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. To accomplish this, we will:

Describe the pre-school and its practices in terms which make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including child minders, and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, with and without disabilities.

Monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place.

Make our equal opportunities policy widely known.

Places are allocated as follows:

- For the 2 to 2½ year old Groups, at the Methodist Church setting. The allocation is made, giving priority to those children who have attended the Stay and Play sessions. Following this, places are allocated in the order in which the child was registered on the waiting list. The waiting list is compiled in date order based on receipt of a formal application.

Fees are as detailed below until the child is eligible to receive the Government Nursery Education Grant. If this grant is not redeemed with us, the fees will increase to the equivalent of the voucher. The Nursery Education Grant covers 38 weeks of each school year.

Consideration will be given to children moving into the area if they have already been attending playgroup or if special circumstances are proved.

When our maximum number is reached the only vacancy will be after the next school intake or when someone leaves.

We will do our best to accommodate children with health conditions/additional needs by considering each individual case and making reasonable adjustments as necessary in consultation with parents/carers and external agencies.

# **The Pre-school Curriculum**

To support the Pre-school's curriculum we encourage the use of Visual Timetables which enable the children to understand and have input into the organisation of the session. We also use Makaton, which is a simple form of sign language and helps to develop all children's communication skills.

The Pre-school works towards the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. The four themes of the Framework are as follows:

## **A Unique Child**

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We will give the children the opportunity to develop at their own rate and ensure that every individual is respected, and no child or family is discriminated against. Children's safety, health and well being are an important part of pre-school life. We will support this by ensuring the children are safe and have a healthy lifestyle within Pre-school.

## **Positive Relationships**

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person. The Pre-school respects and acknowledges the feelings of children and their families.

The Pre-school's vision is to promote close partnerships with parents/carers as this has a positive impact on children's development and learning.

We aim to build strong, warm relationships with our children and each child will have a Key Person who is responsible for working with a small group of children. Through the building of firm relationships this will aim to have a positive impact of children's development.

## **Enabling Environments**

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The Pre-school is committed to giving the children a rich and varied environment to support their learning and development. This will then give them the confidence to explore indoors and outdoors.

Through observing the children, their interests and abilities are taken into account and this in turn enables the Pre-school to plan experiences that are not only challenging but achievable and that support every child's learning.

The Pre-school works in partnership with the wider community and other professionals in order to support their children.

## **Learning and Development**

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of seven areas of learning and development. These are split into two areas: firstly there are three prime areas which are: Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development. These three areas are crucial in enabling children to thrive and learn. The Prime Areas are then strengthened and applied to the four Specific Areas which are as follows: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. Finally the pre-school will reflect on how children learn and this is broken down into the characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning. These are as follows: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically.

The pre-school believe that children learn best by playing and exploring and involving people, objects, ideas and events that will engage them for long periods of time. The adults working with the children support their play by offering a variety of resources, by placing the children in different situations and by asking questions. This enables children to develop their creativity and to think of better ways of doing things.

## **The Outdoor Environment**

The pre-school actively supports the benefits of the outdoor environment and the learning that children can gain from playing outdoors. Research has shown that being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development. The outdoor environment enables children to have first hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world. As a pre-school we have to follow the guidelines of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework which states that all Early Years Practitioners must "ensure that children have opportunities to be outside on a daily basis all year round". To compliment this vision all groups have a nominated day to explore the outdoor area for a longer period of time and they will also spend 15-20 minutes outside on any other day. In addition, the pre-school aims to take the children to visit a local conservation area on several occasions throughout the year to experience Forest School sessions in different seasons.

## **The Pre-school Environment**

We are located within Hanham Methodist Church and with four classrooms and at the Children's Centre with one classroom. This enables us to group the children accordingly. On occasions, the groups will join together for various special events. Each group has a leader and the required number of Early Years Practitioners which ensures that we consistently work within the Government guidelines of 1 practitioner to every 8 children or 1 practitioner to every 4 children for those children aged below 3.

Children will address the staff by their surnames but we would prefer the parents to use our first names.

All groups meet each week for a Planning Meeting to enable us to meet the needs of the children. Ultimately, they all work under the umbrella of our Long Term Plan. Throughout the pre-school year children are involved in various projects, some of which they can take home.

## **Visits**

Before your child starts with us you will be invited to bring them to pre-school to spend the morning with us. This will be an opportunity for you both to become more familiar with the pre-school and to meet some of the other children and the staff team.

Before this we will arrange to visit you in your home so that we can meet you and your child and get to know each other in an environment which is familiar to them. It is also an opportunity for us to talk to you about your child, their likes and dislikes, strengths, etc and any concerns you may have. Typically, it will be your child's Group Leader and another member of the staff team who visit. They will bring with them your child's personal transition book, which includes photographs of different aspects of the pre-school including the staff who will care for your child. This will be left with you until your child starts with us so that you can look through the book together and use it to familiarise your child with the pre-school environment.

## **Key Person System & Assessments**

We ask each of our parents to fill out an "All about me" form on their child. This enables the group leaders to allocate a key person to each child. You will be informed of your child's key person shortly after they start at the Pre-school and at this time you will be invited for a short meeting with your child's group leader and key person to discuss how your child has settled. Each key person works closely with the group leader to observe and assess your child on a regular basis. For all children between the ages of 2 and 3 the pre-school will provide parents with a written summary of their child's development in the three Prime Areas as stated in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. This enables the pre-school to track and monitor your child's progress throughout their time at the pre-school.

All assessments are done through play and we aim to develop each child individually and at their own pace. During the year, you will have regular opportunities to see your child's Learning Journal. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns whenever they arise. In addition you will be asked to comment when your child is a 'focus' for planning, approximately 4 times per year. Formal meetings will take place with your child's key person to review annual summative assessments. We are required to complete a Transition document which will be passed to your child's new school in line with government requirements. Your child's Learning Journal will be given to you when your child leaves pre-school to go to school unless the school requests it.

## **Staff Development**

All members of staff are provided with regular opportunities to develop their skills by attending training courses that are linked with the pre-school's long-term development plan. Completion of these courses serves to develop and strengthen the abilities of the staff and maintain an up to date pre-school.

## **Formal Complaints Procedure**

In the case of a parent who is uneasy about any aspect of a group's provision, he or she should firstly speak with the Pre-school Manager. If the outcome of this is unsatisfactory, then parents/carers should put their complaint in writing to the Board of Trustees

(Complaints Lead). Details can be found on the foyer notice board. A copy of the Complaints Policy can be found on the pre-school website.

## **Additional Needs**

Children with additional needs are part of the pre-school's ethos. We have 2 Special Needs Co-ordinators (Senco) who work with children either individually or in small groups, depending on what support the child needs. All children are treated equally in accordance with the pre-school policy.

Positive partnerships with parents ensure that SEN Support Plans are effective in meeting the specific needs of the children/child. These are reviewed regularly with all parties concerned.

When additional support from outside the setting is required, the pre-school will contact the relevant agencies in agreement with the parents/carers. This enables the pre-school to work in partnership with outside professionals supporting both the child and their family.

## **Safeguarding**

Whilst the pre-school is not an investigation agency, a strong emphasis is placed on the staff teams to safeguard the children that attend pre-school. All members of staff are trained to identify and acknowledge when children and families are in need of support. Staff are obliged to raise their concerns with the Group Leader and the pre-school Designated Safeguard Leads. All concerns will be treated in the strictest confidence. In severe cases of child abuse the pre-school are obliged to inform Social Services and parents will be made aware of any action taken, unless the preschool deems the child to be at high risk. Our aim is to create a pre-school environment that ensures children are safeguarded and protected from any form of abuse and which will give continued support to children and families.

As a pre-school and as a staff team our priority is always for the safety and wellbeing of the children and their families. With this in mind we strive to maintain the highest levels of confidentiality at all times; details of our stance regarding this matter are contained within our Confidentiality Procedure which is available for you to see on the pre-school noticeboard.

The growing use of technology and social networking sites increases the opportunities for problems to occur in this area and South Gloucestershire Council have provided guidelines which must be followed. This guidance includes the following statements:

- ❖ Adults will not engage in an on-line activity that may compromise their professional responsibilities or compromise the reputation of the setting or the safety and wellbeing of staff and children.
- ❖ Adults will only communicate with parents/carers using official systems unless given permission.

All of our staff team have been asked not to discuss any of the children on any occasion away from the setting. Please can we therefore ask that you ensure that any questions or concerns you have regarding your child are addressed during session time and not at any other time. All staff must abide by our Confidentiality Policy and you could not only put

them into an awkward situation but you may also be compromising their position by approaching them at any other time. We would also be grateful if you could consider these points when having any contact with any of the staff team via social networking sites, such as Facebook.

Through every day practice the pre-school actively implements and promotes British Values – these are democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance and rule of law.

## **Access**

We encourage our families to walk to pre-school, however, if you must drive it is vital that you drive extremely slowly when entering and leaving the car park and always be aware of small children. The car parks only have a limited space and on any one day at the Methodist Church there are around 70 parents plus staff together with church members and the general public using the car park. There will therefore often be days when there are just not sufficient spaces for everybody. If there are not spaces, please do not block others in as this is both very inconsiderate and potentially dangerous for our children walking through the car park.

It is important that parents keep a careful watch on their children as they are their own responsibility whilst in the car park, and we would like to request that you hold your child's hand at all times whilst walking in the car park.

In addition, we often have families who need to be able to use the disabled spaces in the car park, particularly the one at the bottom and it is imperative that the disabled spaces are left free.

There may be times when we ask that the car park is not used, for instance if the Church have a specific need for it to be kept clear.

Access to and from Pre-school is via the bottom door only. Please do not use the entrance at the top of the church.

Fire regulations prohibit pushchairs and prams from the corridors when bringing or collecting your child. We do appreciate that this can be a problem with small babies if they are asleep so please speak with the Pre-school Manager who will try to help.

The building complies with the Government disability access requirements. The building is safe and secure and access is monitored during pre-school sessions.

## **Fire Drills**

Regular fire drills are held at the pre-school. A **fire bell** is the signal given if a fire is discovered. Whenever the alarm sounds, you should immediately go with the rest of the staff and children to the assembly point at the far side of the car park. Hallways and exits must be permanently kept clear. In the event of a fire, arrangements have been made to accommodate the children in nearby premises.



## **Toilets**

These are located at the top and the bottom of the building. In the case of accidents, fresh clothing will be supplied and parents should wash and return this on their next session.

## **Clothing**

Each child should be presented in clean and sensible play clothes that they can easily manage at the toilet. The children are encouraged to play outside each day and it is important that you send them in clothes which can get messy. Your child should also have a waterproof set so that they are able to play outside whatever the weather. Practical footwear is advisable for climbing and running etc. All outdoor clothing should carry the child's name. For reasons of safety, jewellery – including earrings – should not be worn.

The pre-school has a specially designed t-shirt, and we are very keen for all children to have one for various reasons, including safety and security when the children are on trips away from the building and also to wear during various presentations. We also have a specially designed sun hat and gym bag which we would like each child to have. The sun hat is for sun safety when the children are taken outdoors and the gym bag will be used to bring in your child's sun hat, a pair of plimsolls for outdoor use and sun cream during the warmer months. We would therefore like to request that you purchase one of each item – these are sold to you at cost price and no profit is made on by the Pre-school. In addition, we can arrange to supply you with a waterproof set.

## **Payment of Fees**

Current fees are £16.00 for a 3 hour session, £20.00 for a 4 hour session or £25.00 for a 5 hour session, or Nursery Grant per session (for full details, please refer to our Admissions Policy at the beginning of this booklet). It is our preferred method to use monthly Standing Orders to pay fees and we would ask that these are set up for the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Payment schedules will be given out prior to your child starting pre-school. Should this payment method be unsuitable for you the pre-school will endeavour to make other arrangements.

All fees must be paid irrespective of absence. Absence of four weeks without notification will be regarded as termination of membership but fees will still be due for this period.

Non payment of fees will result in a child losing their place at the pre-school.

As a registered charity, the organisation does not aim to make a profit, but our income has to cover rental of the premises, staff costs, insurance, membership of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (P.L.A.) and equipment. Your fees are geared to meet this outlay.

## **Early Years Pupil Premium**

From April 2015 all early years providers who deliver Government funded early years education will be able to claim the Early Years Premium for three and four year old

children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits. Eligibility for this could be worth up to an extra £300 for the pre-school to spend providing such things as additional support or resources for the benefit of your child. More information on this will be given to you nearer your child's third birthday.

## **Collection**

When collecting your child, please be prompt. Lateness may incur a fine, since a member of staff has to stay with your child. At the end of the session, if no contact is made within 30 minutes, South Gloucestershire Social Services will be notified to arrange temporary care.

If someone other than the usual person is collecting your child the Group Leader should be informed at the beginning of the session and you will be asked to enter the appropriate details in a log book. If this does not happen then you will need to contact the Pre-school to inform them who will be collecting your child and both you and the person collecting will be asked to quote your child's unique password. The Group Leader will also satisfy themselves as to the physical description of the person collecting your child. No child is allowed to leave with an unauthorised person or an older child. It is very important that these procedures are adhered to as it can be very awkward and embarrassing both for us and the person collecting if the procedures have not been followed and we cannot release your child. We are sure you will appreciate that the safety of your child is paramount to us.

## **Parental Involvement**

The Pre-school operates a parent/carer rota. This is normally one session every 4/5 weeks. The pre-school believes that parents play an important role in their child's development. By participating in the rota, you will have a greater understanding of what your child will be learning at pre-school. If you have a hidden talent – are you good with computers, play the piano or guitar, please speak to your child's group leader. In line with our Safeguarding Policy you will be asked to hand in your mobile phone during the time you are with us.

Various events are organised throughout the year and we would encourage you to support these.

## **Accidents/First Aid**

The safety of young children is of paramount importance to the pre-school. All incidents are recorded in the Accident Book and parents will be informed of any situations that arise. Minor injuries are treated in Pre-school. In the case of a more serious accident we will inform you immediately.

All permanent staff members are qualified in Paediatric First Aid.

## **Change of Records**

Any change of address, phone number, doctor or employment should be given to the Pre-school Manager since it is essential, in the case of an emergency, that an up to date record of each child is available.

## **Illness/Medicines**

Parents are asked that children who are unwell should not be sent to pre-school and any child who has been sick or suffered from diarrhoea should be kept at home for 48 hours after the last bout of sickness/diarrhoea. Infections of this kind spread very quickly where young children are concerned. Please see the 'Communicable Diseases' sheet which is included in your Parent Pack for full details.

The Pre-school Manager and the Group Leader should always be informed of any medical conditions, for example, if the child has asthma or an allergy, or any infectious condition, and an individual Health Care Plan will be drawn up for your child if required.

## **Pre-school Visits**

All parents will be informed, either by email/website or verbally, if your children will be going out on a visit. We will ask you to sign giving permission for your child to go on trips. Without your signature your child will not be able to participate in the trip.

## **Contingency Fund**

The contingency fund was set up to enable us to help any family who finds itself unable to pay pre-school fees due to unexpected circumstances. Should you wish to apply for this funding please put your case in writing with relevant details to the Board of Trustees who will consider it at the next scheduled meeting.

## **Termination of Membership**

Should you wish to withdraw your child from the pre-school, 4 weeks notice is required. Please note that this is 4 weeks of term time and does not include half terms or Christmas/summer holidays.

Absence of four weeks without notification will be regarded as termination of membership but fees/grant will still be due for this period.

A full and comprehensive copy of all our policies and procedures (including our Admissions Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, etc) is available on request.

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