



HARTWELL PRE-SCHOOL

INFORMATION PACK

Welcome to Hartwell Pre-School Playgroup.

HARTWELL PRE-SCHOOL GENERAL POLICY

The main responsibility of the Staff and Committee is the welfare of the child and helping them to have the very best start in life.

Hartwell Pre-School aims to aid the personal, social, physical, creative, emotional, mathematical, moral and cultural development of each individual child. This is gained through planned and co-ordinated play and activities both within the playgroup and through arranged outings. With careful supervision our aim is to stimulate and encourage each child to express, explore and discover old and new skills, experiences, interests and achievements at their own pace. This will be carried out in a safe, happy and stable environment.

Parental involvement is encouraged and we will endeavour to keep parents updated on planned activities/outings well in advance to enable feedback and suggestions. Aside from involvement in the activities/outings we welcome any constructive criticism/ideas on ways to improve the playgroup generally. We print regular Newsletters giving details of forthcoming events/activities and the outcome of past events as well as any other relevant and interesting information.

It is through the continual assessment and improvement of our management of the playgroup the development and quality of future pre-school care for our children is assured.

We are able to offer access to the disabled and with prior arrangements to children with special needs.

Pre School operates within an equal opportunities policy.

WHO ARE WE?

We are a community Pre School with charitable status, owned and run by the parents of the children attending the group. We are able to offer a place for 24 children for each session we hold. We accept children from 2 years 6 months.

An Annual General Meeting is held each autumn term where a Committee is elected from all the parents. This Committee is responsible for the day-to-day management and running of the playgroup. The Committee consists of a Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer and up to 7 general members

All members of our Staff are registered with OFSTED and must undergo strict clearances before being employed. We comply with all the relevant laws and regulations, including full insurance and fire arrangements. OFSTED carry out regular inspections to ensure we comply with their rules and regulations; the resulting report is available to all parents upon request or online via www.ofsted.gov.uk/find-ofsted-inspectors-report.

We have a number of strict policies under which Pre School operates. These cover: Child Protection, Admissions, Equal Opportunities, Discipline, Health and Safety and our Complaints Procedure plus many more. These are on display in the setting in the relevant folder.

All Pre School Staff attend relevant training courses. All Staff hold current Safeguarding qualifications. Safeguarding is our priority to ensure we are working to current legislation, and so that Staff are able to identify signs and indicators where a child is at risk of significant harm and what action to take. All Staff hold current First Aid Certificates to enable us to give sick or injured children the best course of action.

WHERE IS PRE SCHOOL HELD?

We hold the Pre School at Hartwell Community Centre from Monday to Friday, term time only during the following times:

Monday	Morning 9:15–12:00	Lunch 12:00–12:45	Afternoon 12:45–3:15
Tuesday	Morning 9:15–12:00	Lunch 12:00–12:45	
Wednesday	Morning 9:15–12:00	Lunch 12:00–12:45	Afternoon 12:45–3:15
Thursday	Morning 9:15–12:00	Lunch 12:00–12:45	Afternoon 12:45–3:15
Friday	Morning 9:15–12:00	Lunch 12:00–12:45	Afternoon 12:45–3:15

The Monday session is reserved specifically for the children who will be going to school the following September. The children focus on activities in preparation for school.

Wednesday afternoon sessions are our Outdoor Learning sessions and are reserved for 3 year olds.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Sessions cost £5 per hour for 3 and 4 year olds (for hours not covered by Government Funding) and £5.50 per hour for under 3's. (This drops to £5 per hour on the term following their third birthday).

We also ask for a £15 voluntary donation along with your registration form to help cover administration costs.

When your child is three and qualifies for the Government Funding* your child is entitled to 15 hours free childcare.

If your child is attending lunch you need to provide your child with a packed lunch in a cool bag, please ensure there are no fizzy drinks, glass containers and we would prefer no chocolate or sweets.

This can be paid weekly, half-termly, termly or monthly in advance. We would prefer payment to be made direct to the bank but we also accept cash or cheques with a guarantee card. We also accept childcare vouchers.

If your child is unable to attend a session, payment is still required. This also applies if your child is sick or you are on holiday and take your child out of Pre School of your own accord.

***GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

All children qualify for 15 hours per week (for the 38 week academic year) from the term following their 3rd birthday. At Pre School we apply for the funding on your behalf. All you need to do is fill in a form at the beginning of the term which we will supply you with. The total amount of funding available equals 570 hours (15 hours x 38 weeks) of childcare over a 12 month period and can be split between two settings, any additional hours need to be paid for at the normal session rate.

Some 3 year olds will qualify for 30 hours of funding. To check eligibility visit: <https://childcarechoices.gov.uk>

Some 2 year olds also qualify for government funding. Please use the Online Eligibility Checker (OEC) on the following web page:

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/children/early-learning-childcare/pages/free-childcare-for-2-year-olds.aspx>

If your child qualifies please tell us as soon as possible as claims cannot be backdated so you may have to pay fees until the claim is completed.

OVERDUE FEES

Fees will only be allowed to go one week into arrears. It is embarrassing for the Treasurer to be in the situation to chase fees and we request that you try and prevent this from occurring by paying promptly and in advance. If fees remain unpaid the child will not be accepted back until arrears are paid in full. (Unless an agreement is arranged fees will also accrue for any sessions the child is not able to attend due to unpaid fees.) Families experiencing difficulty in paying fees can talk to the Committee to support their individual needs.

SETTLING CHILDREN IN AT PRE SCHOOL

Children will be invited into Pre School for a visit before they actually commence attending. This allows your child to become familiar with the setting and meet the Staff, particularly their Keyperson, and other children. It also allows you to complete some additional paperwork and discuss any individual needs/care so that on your child's first day you and your child's Keyperson can focus on settling your child into Pre School. Please call Elaine, Group Leader, on 07522 924 733 to arrange a visit.

When your child first starts at Pre School it is a new experience and requires you to settle them into a new routine reassuringly. Be patient, it may take several sessions before your child is happily settled. This is the first big step to independence that your child will make - it may take longer than you expect to become a happy event.

Your keyperson will discuss with you how you wish to handle the leaving of your child during your settling in period.

ABOUT THE SESSIONS

We operate a "running café" system, whereby any child may visit the café when they feel hungry. Snack is available for both morning and afternoon sessions. Snacks are limited to one per child and water is available throughout the session. Please ensure any food or

drink allergies/preferences are noted to the supervisor and we will work with you to accommodate your child's needs. These will also be taken into account on special days such as Shrove Tuesday and Chinese New Year.

AREAS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

During your child's time with us we aim to offer a wide and varied curriculum which covers the seven areas of Learning and Development as laid down by the government. These learning goals are an important part of your child's education. By providing you with the activities of what your child will be doing at Pre School and the aims behind them it enables you, the parent to continue the learning experience within the home environment.

The early learning goals are:

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Learning to live with others, co-operating and functioning in both the family and outside groups. Developing confidence and respect for others.

COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE - Good communication skills and developing confidence and skills to express themselves

LITERACY – encouraging the first stages of reading and writing

MATHEMATICS - Sorting, counting, matching and recognising shapes, mathematical understanding and numeracy.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD - Awareness of the environment. Understanding history, geography, science and technology.

PHYSICAL - Mobility, agility, physical control and co-ordination, health and self care.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS & DESIGN - Learning to use imagination and express ideas and feelings through role play, art, music and movement.

We assess your child's development by continual observation and record keeping and build up a development file that we encourage you, the child's carer to add to.

KEYPERSON SCHEME

We operate a Keyperson Scheme where each child is allocated a specific member of staff as their Keyperson. This occurs when the child initially joins Pre School.

The allocation of Keyperson allows the Keyperson to learn the child's individual needs and interests, which in turn enables them to develop any specific learning/development projects whilst the child is at Pre School and to liaise with the child's family to encourage that development to continue at home. The parent can also advise the Keyperson of any projects/experiences developing at home to enable them to be expanded while the child attends Pre School.

These special 'projects' may involve one to one involvement between the child and their Keyperson or it could be expanded to include other children and other members of the Pre School Staff.

As well as a medium to encourage individual development of a child the Keyperson Scheme is also an excellent way to help in overcoming the day-to-day problems often experienced as a child grows and develops. The close contact encouraged between the family/child/Keyperson enable these matters to be discussed/observed and a way of overcoming the situation developed which can be used both during the time spent at home and during Pre School. This offers the child the stability/consistency of care they require during these turbulent times of growing up.

MONDAY SESSIONS

Our Monday sessions are special as these are for children who are due to start school the following September. As these are for our 'big' children the session has a slightly different emphasis. We hold a weekly P.E. session from the Summer term, children are encouraged to line up before they go home, and the activities are geared towards the more academic side of Pre School. These are all invaluable skills the children will need to practice before starting school.

We also have close links with the local primary school and visits are made during the Summer term to their library to look at their range of books and listen to stories. On these visits we also take our lunch and sit and eat in the school hall with the school children. For children not going up to Hartwell Primary we create links with other schools by having photographs in folders to look at and talk about, along with examples of their uniform.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSIONS

We have a special session on Wednesday afternoons called 'Mini Explorers'. This is reserved for 3 year olds. This will involve visits to the Pocket Park, School pond and lots of fun learning outside. We have introduced this session as being in the setting can be quite restrictive at times, this will allow the children to run, be noisy, be messy and to extend their learning through play and exploring our local environment.

We hope that you have found this Information Pack informative and find the details enclosed useful. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact a member of Staff or Committee who will be pleased to assist.

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