

ST NICOLAS PRE-SCHOOL



AND PLAYGROUP

# ST NICOLAS PRESCHOOL PROSPECTUS



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## Introduction

*St Nicolas Pre-school aims to:*

- provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age
- work in partnership with parents to help children learn and develop
- add to the life and well-being of the local community
- offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

### Mission Statement

At St Nicolas Pre-school we aim to enhance the development and education of children under the statutory school age, within a community-based group. We aim to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment and ensure equality of opportunity for all children and their families.

*We aim to ensure that each child:*

- is in a safe and stimulating environment
- is given care and attention by our team of qualified staff
- has the opportunity to join in with other children to learn how to communicate outside the family unit
- can build on what they already know, moving forward to learn and develop at their own pace
- has a key person who makes sure each child makes progress
- is part of a preschool that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop

### Admissions policy

#### Admission Policy

Your time at St Nicolas Preschool begins in the September following your child's 3rd birthday, and we have one main intake a year - however if places are available in the January, then Autumn born children who are three may be offered places in the undersubscribed sessions – please indicate your interest on your application form if this is applicable to you. Children will attend Preschool for 1 year (starting from the September), after which they will have the opportunity of moving on to a main stream school of your choice.

#### Funded Places and Fees

Children are funded by the local Education Authority (LEA), for 15 hours per week (universal offer) or up to 30 hours (extended offer for eligible families), from the term following their 3rd birthday. Any extra/non funded sessions will be invoiced to you. We also offer a lunch club for an additional charge. Any attendance over 6 hours in one day will also incur an additional charge. Please contact the Grants and Fees Coordinator for information on fees and invoicing.

## **Your time at St Nicolas Pre-school and Playgroup**

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, which covers seven areas of learning (please see Development Matters for further information).

All staff are qualified to teach 3-5 year olds and take safeguarding children as a high priority.

In September your child will be allocated a key person who will support them throughout the year, offering a caring and nurturing experience. We at St Nicolas Preschool strive to offer all children and their families an exciting learning experience ensuring equality and diversity and an environment which reflects individual cultures and backgrounds.

We are able to offer an adult to child ratio that is higher than legal requirements. Each child's key person will take a special interest in your child, keeping a confidential progress file, assessing and recording your child's achievements and abilities (using an online Learning Journey Profile, and transfer documents published by OCC), and using these to plan an individual programme and link up with other settings your child may be attending. These transfer documents, with your permission, will be handed to the school of your choice. Copies of the transfer documents will be given to parents for their contribution. They are available to you at any time via your key person. These will be handed to you at the end of your child's time at preschool.

## Children's development and learning

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2017). This encompasses the Early Years Statutory Guidance and Development Matters.

### **A Unique Child**

*Child Development:* Skilful communication, competent learner.

*Inclusive Practice:* Equality and diversity, children's entitlements, early support.

*Keeping Safe:* Being safe and protected, discovering boundaries, making choices.

*Health and Well-being:* Growth and developing, physical and emotional well-being.

### **Positive Relationships**

*Respecting Each other:* Understanding feelings, friendship, professional relationships.

*Parents as Partners:* Respecting diversity, communication, learning together.

*Supporting Learning:* Positive interactions, listening to children, effective teaching.

*Key Person:* Secure attachment, shared care, independence.

### **Enabling Environments**

*Observation, Assessment and Planning:* Starting with the child, planning, assessment.

*Supporting Every Child:* Children's needs, the learning journey, working together.

*The Learning Environment:* The emotional environment, the outdoor environment, the indoor environment.

*The Wider Context:* Transitions and continuity, multi-agency working, the community.

### **Learning and Development**

*Play and Exploration:* Learning through experience, adult involvement, contexts for learning.

*Active Learning:* Mental and physical involvement, decision making, personalised learning.

*Creativity and Physical Thinking:* Making connections, transforming and understanding, sustained shared thinking.

## Areas of development and learning

### How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our pre-school helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.



#### **The Early Learning Goals**

##### ***The prime areas***

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

##### ***The specific areas***

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

For each area, the practice guidance sets out the Early Learning Goals. These are what children work towards achieving before the end of the Foundation Stage i.e. the end of your child's Reception year at primary school. Guidance of how children achieve these goals are set out in 'Development Matters' and 'Now and Next' booklets.



## *Early Learning Areas and Goals*

### *The prime areas*

#### **Communication and language**

- **Listening and attention:** children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.
- **Understanding:** children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.
- **Speaking:** children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

#### **Physical development**



- **Moving and handling:** children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.
- **Health and self-care:** children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

## Personal, social and emotional development



- **Self-confidence and self-awareness:** children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.
- **Managing feelings and behaviour:** children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.
- **Making relationships:** children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

### *The specific areas*

#### Literacy

- **Reading:** children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.
- **Writing:** children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.



## Mathematics



- **Numbers:** children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.
- **Shape, space and measures:** children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

## Understanding the world



- **People and communities:** children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences

between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

- **The world:** children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.
- **Technology:** children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.

### Expressive arts and design



- **Exploring and using media and materials:** children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- **Being imaginative:** children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.

## Our approach to learning, development and assessment

### Learning through play

Play is an important part of a child's development. This is everything a child hears, sees, touches and experiences in their environment. We offer opportunities for children to learn through their own ideas, extending their learning areas by offering resources and guidance which is reflected in all areas of the preschool. Many areas of preschool are specifically aimed for individual learning opportunities i.e. home corner, computer, writing and maths corner, outside area – children use these to develop at their own pace, supported by staff and their peers.

### Assessment

Children are assessed throughout their time at preschool through ongoing observations, photos and have individual educational plans (supported by parents) to reflect and build on each child's next steps. These assessments are transferred to children's profiles and put into our tracking system which we share regularly with parents to celebrate their achievements and look at future goals.

### Records of achievement

Your child's key person will work with you to keep this record, collecting information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the key person will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

## About the pre-school

### The Preschool's timetable and routines

Preschool offer a structured, flexible timetable of events throughout the week. These can be found in the preschool foyer displays.

Care and education are closely linked to offer your child the opportunity to build helpful routines that will support your child to become independent learners of the future. We do this by

- helping each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the preschool
- ensuring the safety of each child
- helping children by experiencing social interaction as part of a group
- encouraging children to value learning experiences.

We provide care and education for young children between the ages of **three and four years**. We are open during term time each year. You will be offered up to 32.5 hours per week, 15 hours (universal offer) or 30 hours (extended offer if eligible) of which you may use your funding.

The session times are:

**Morning** pre-school from: 8.45am–11.45am.

**Afternoon** pre-school from: 12.15pm – 3.15pm

**Full day:** 8.45am-2.45pm

**Extended Session:** 8.45am-3.15pm (additional charge automatically applied)

Lunch club can be added to morning or afternoon sessions (11.45am-12.15pm)

### **Working together for your children**

Our adult to child ratios continue to be higher than legal welfare requirements. We also encourage parental involvement as we feel this benefits children's links to home. This helps us to:

- give more time and attention to each child
- give safety a high priority without restricting their independent exploration
- offer more one to one interaction
- ensure that they receive continuity in their care and learning







## **Snacks**

The preschool makes snack time a social time during which children and adults sit together. We plan the menus for snacks so that they provide the children with healthy and nutritious food. Children are involved in preparing the snack area, encouraging independence and contributing to a healthy lifestyle.

## **Policies**

A list of the preschool's policies are listed in your induction pack and can be found on the preschool's website [stnicolaspreschoolabingdon.org](http://stnicolaspreschoolabingdon.org). The policies are updated yearly.

## **Safeguarding children**

Safeguarding children is a high priority at St Nicolas Preschool. We have a duty of care for all our children and all staff are trained in safeguarding. Our lead safeguarding officer is Ms Gaynor Hunter.

We support all our families through any life's challenges which may arise and work together with appropriate agencies to help families in difficulty.

All staff go through a strict procedure of checks, including DBS checks and references, and Committee members also have enhanced DBS's and confidentiality agreements as part of their induction.

## **Special needs**

As part of the preschool's policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have. The pre-school works to the requirements of the 1993 Education Act, SEN and Disability Act 2001 and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2015). Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Ms Gaynor Hunter.

## **Fees**

The fees are £17.00 per 3 hour session and payable termly in advance. Fees must still be paid if children are absent for a short period of time e.g. holidays or sickness. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, talk to Ms Hunter, who is the Manager, or the Committee chairperson.

For your child to keep her/his place at the pre-school, you must pay the fees. We are in receipt of nursery education funding for three and four year olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply.

## **Starting at our pre-school**

### *The first days*

We want you and your child to feel happy and safe with us. The staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child settle into the pre-school. Our policy about helping children to settle is enclosed in this prospectus or is available from Ms Hunter.

### *Clothing*

We provide protective clothing (aprons) for the children when they play with messy activities. We wish to make parents aware that children will be encouraged to explore all areas of messy play. We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off, and putting on, outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our pre-school and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. The staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions. We encourage parents to share their skills with our group.

## **Complaints procedure**

We have a full complaints policy which should be followed if you have any concerns about pre-school or staff. [This can be found in the Operational plan in the foyer or in your induction pack on entry to the group].

Alternatively you may contact the Ofsted complaints Helpline.

Tel: 0300 123 1231

*or write to address below:*

**The National Business Unit,  
OFSTED,  
Piccadilly Gate,  
Store Street,  
Manchester M1 2WD (Tel: 0300 123 1231)**



## Links with St Nicolas School

St. Nicolas Pre-school is in partnership with St. Nicolas School Foundation Stage. This is run by a Joint Steering Group, which has a parent from each setting among its representatives.

This partnership gives our children an opportunity to experience a school environment. Our links with the school encourage a smooth transition into school life.

**PLEASE NOTE: Although we work closely with St Nicolas School, attending our pre-school does not guarantee a place at St Nicolas School. You will need to apply online, for more information please visit:**

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)



### The Management of the Pre-school

At St. Nicolas Pre-school the tasks involved in managing the pre-school are shared by an elected Committee and Staff, using an Action Plan to help the pre-school progress. Our Committee is made up of parents, elected by the parents of the children who attend the pre-school. The elections take place at our Annual General Meeting in October.

The committee is responsible for:

- informing the Trustees of group arrangements
- managing the pre-school's finances
- employing and managing staff
- making sure that the pre-school has, and works to, policies that help it to provide a high quality service
- making sure that the pre-school works in partnership with the children's parents.

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all the children who attend the pre-school. It is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's plan.

### Key person and your child

Our pre-school uses a key person approach. Each member of staff has a group of children for whom they are particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that what we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the pre-school, they will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the pre-school, they will help your child to benefit from the activities.

## **Learning opportunities for adults**

As well as gaining qualifications in early years care and education, the pre-school staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date. The pre-school also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice in early years care and education, as a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, through the Under 5 magazine and publications produced by the Alliance. The current copy of Under 5 is available for you to read. Courses for parents are held locally by the Pre-school Learning Alliance; watch out for information about these.

## **Feedback of children's progress**

We actively encourage all parents to become involved in all areas of the preschool experience. We offer daily contact with your key person and for a more in depth look into your child's progress you can arrange a one to one meeting to discuss your child's achievements and next steps. The manager also offers confidential meetings with parent(s)/carers to discuss any aspects of your child's life and will support families in all areas.

## **Parental involvement**

We encourage parents to firstly become involved in the day to day running of preschool by either taking on a position on the Committee or by offering some of their time to share a session where all parental input is valued. Please feel welcome to share some of your skills with the group i.e. musical instruments, creative abilities, languages and cultural festivals etc. This also means that as we are a parent run group the need for a committee is essential and the only way we can continue to offer this life experience is where you are at the centre.

## **Ideas for Involvement**

Our pre-school recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the pre-school a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents such as:

- Ongoing exchange of knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff.
- Taking part in a preschool session
- Sharing their own special interests with the children.
- Through the Committee helping to provide, make and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities.
- Being part of the management Committee of the pre-school.
- Taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the pre-school.
- Informing through the parents' contribution board your child's interests
- Joining in community activities in which the pre-school takes part.

- Building good relationships with other parents and the local community.

### **The parent's voluntary rota**

The pre-school has a voluntary rota (in the foyer) which parents can put their name forward if they would like to help at a particular pre-school session. Helping at the session enables parents to see what the day-to-day life of the pre-school is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities.

## ***Appendix A:***

### **List of our Policies and Procedures**

- 1) Admissions
- 2) Adult Health and Safety
- 3) Anti Bullying
- 4) Behaviour Management
- 5) Complaints Procedures
- 6) Confidentiality
- 7) Curriculum
- 8) Data Protection & Photographs
- 9) Diet
- 10) Equality and Diversity
- 11) First Aid
- 12) Health and Hygiene
- 13) Inclusion of Children with SEN
- 14) Interaction & Transition
- 15) Inter-cultural Education
- 16) Missing Child
- 17) Nappy Changing
- 18) Overtime Payments
- 19) Parental Involvement
- 20) Payment of Fees
- 21) Personal Care
- 22) Child Protection
- 23) Safety
- 24) Selecting Equipment
- 25) Settling into pre-school
- 26) Staffing, Employment & Recruitment
- 27) Student Placement
- 28) Teaching and Learning
- 29) Uncollected Child
- 30) Key Person
- 31) Administering Medicines
- 32) Whistle Blowing Policy
- 33) British Values and Prevent Duty
- 34) Workplace Pension Policy

## ***Appendix B:***

### **Settling into Pre-school and Playgroup Policy and Practice**

We want children to feel safe and happy and be able to share with their parents / carers afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed in our Pre-school & Playgroup.

Our settling procedures aim to assist parents to help their children to feel comfortable in the Pre-school & Playgroup, to benefit from what we have to offer and to be confident that their parents / carer will return at the end of the session.

In order to accomplish this we will:

- Help them to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship in the absence of their parents / carers.
- Encourage parents / carers to visit our Pre-school & Playgroup with their children during the term before an admission is planned.
- Introduce flexible admission procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of individual families and children.
- Make clear to families from the outset that they will be supported in the Pre-school & Playgroup for as long as it takes to settle their child.
- Introduce new families into the group on a staggered basis, for example two to three new children a day rather than new children all at once.
- Encourage parents / carers where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first gradually building up to longer absences.
- Reassure and support parents / carers whose children seem to be taking a long time to settle.
- Offer an opportunity for the whole family to attend an open morning, to meet staff and peers, held during the spring term before the child is due to start.