

ST ALBANS STEINER KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Kindergarten, we hope that you enjoy your time with us. This little booklet hopes to show how we work in partnership with parents and carers and that together we can make your child's time at kindergarten a positive and valuable experience.



The aim of the kindergarten is to provide a gentle first step towards independence for the child. We provide a family like structure, and a warm, friendly, nurturing environment for all children. The kindergarten is open to every child and family from all sections of the community; we believe strongly that we have a social responsibility make the kindergarten available to everyone regardless of religious, social, ethnic and cultural group, special needs or financial

situation. We promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice that ensures that every child is included and not at a disadvantage. It is our aim to ensure that every child is treated as an individual with individual needs.

The kindergarten supports the families and carers of the children. Staff, parents and carers all work together to provide a warm and caring family atmosphere, so that there is a shared experience, and common ideals.

Together we aim to assist the children to develop into confident well-balanced adults. Underlining all that we do is an understanding of Rudolf Steiner's philosophy on early childhood education.

Children of all ages are welcome:

❖ From birth- three years of age
Friday morning Parent/Carer and Child Group.
10am - 12pm

❖ Age 2 to 6 years
Monday - Thursday during term time.
9.30am to 1.30pm

Early starts available from 8.30am

Our Approach

At Kindergarten we create an environment where a child will widen their physical, social and educational development, providing a firm foundation for further life skills.

We reflect the natural world around us as well as the seasons. The toys and materials used within the Kindergarten's daily routine are all made from natural materials. The festivals celebrated within Kindergarten are all related to the natural seasonal cycle, incorporating festivals from cultures of all of our children. Please let us know if you would like to share a celebration or festival with us.

The Kindergarten day works with a strong rhythm, thus making the child feel safe, secure and nurtured within its boundaries, giving them the freedom to play and learn.

We have a library of books available in the Kindergarten on subjects such as child health and development, Rudolf Steiner, festivals, crafts etc. Please do ask if you are interested.

How are we regulated?

Kindergarten is answerable to Ofsted and has received a 'Good' judgement in our last inspection in 2016.

We also receive funding from County for children from the term after their third birthday to the term after their fifth birthday and are registered for funding for 2 year olds.

We follow the E.Y.F.S (Early Years Foundation

Stage) framework but we have the following exemptions from the Department of Education:

- The formal teaching of phonics, sounds, blending and writing or the alphabet
- The formal teaching of reading;
- The formal teaching of number recognition
- The formal abstract teaching of adding and subtracting
- The teaching of communication technology.

Daily Routine

Every morning we have a good morning ring which all parents and carers are encouraged and welcome to join. After the ring please leave promptly so staff and children can make a full use of the morning.

Each day the children will do some baking or food preparation, which enables them to eat a healthy vegetarian lunch: bread rolls, home made soup, vegetables, cheese, fruit. We will ensure that our meals cater for children with food allergies.

The children have time to engage in "open-ended" play. During this session the craft table is set out, where seasonal activities are offered. Tidy away time arrives with a song.

Now we sit down and sing and play finger games which help with fine motor skills, circle time which has seasonal games which help their co-ordination and large motor skills. This is followed by a shared lunch

together as a group before going into the garden. The morning finishes with a seasonal or topical story.

Parent and Child Group

We meet on Fridays at 10am until 12pm. This is a gentle introduction to the Kindergarten and its structure and philosophies. We enjoy open-ended play, indoors and out, and a shared snack which the children can help to prepare. We encourage parents to start their child in this group.

Record keeping and Parents' meetings

We monitor and keep confidential written records on your child's progress. These records are available to parents on request. We are also available to discuss your child's progress by prior arrangement. Parent consultation sessions are held twice a year.

Staff

Susanna (Zanna) Millicheap- Manager and lead teacher

Zanna has been involved in the Kindergarten for nineteen years. She is a trained child nurse and Steiner teacher and has an MA in Early Years Education. She oversees the running of the Kindergarten and works

here every day.

Lucynda Howard - Deputy Manager has been a parent, Trustee, Chair of Trustees and is now a Kindergarten practitioner. She has a degree in Art and Design and is a practising qualified teacher with a specialism in Art.

Vicky Gutteridge has also been a parent at Kindergarten and is also now a practitioner here at Kindergarten. She is a qualified primary teacher with a BA Hons in Theatre Design.

Sally Robinson has been a parent and is now a practitioner at Kindergarten. She is a practising qualified teacher with a BA Hons in Linguistics, English Literature and French.

As you can see we have very experienced and qualified staff. Parents are the child's first teacher and thus become a very important part of the Kindergarten. Parents are welcome to participate in the life of the Kindergarten. Please let us know of any skills you would like to share. Your help is fully appreciated.

Festivals

We hope to enjoy your family's company in celebrating our seasonal and end of term festivals

which are an important part of the Kindergarten year. These are very special occasions and provide opportunities for families to feel part of our community. You may also wish to bring festivals particular to your culture or religion for all the children to experience, if so please discuss any ideas with Zanna.

Home Toys

The children soon accept that all Kindergarten toys are to share. Apart from comforters please discourage your child from bringing their own toys since this often causes distress either when the toy becomes lost or other children wish to play with the toy. We have a visitor's basket by the door for the toys to rest in upon arrival if necessary.

Clothing

Please bring clothing appropriate to the weather. We always try to go in the garden so coats and hats for the cold and summer hats for the sun. Please apply sunscreen onto your child's skin during the hot summer months. Wellies are essential when it is wet because the grass gets very slippery and there are many puddles.

The Kindergarten provides slippers for every child. Please help your child to put them on when they arrive.

We like children to be happy in what they wear but we discourage pictures and images on clothing such as monsters, superheroes, skeletons etc.

Attendance

Please ring if you are unable to attend.

Kindergarten's telephone number: 07712104510

Zanna's telephone number: 07970 117251

Sickness

Please do not bring your child if he/she feels unwell. Allow 48 hours to pass after a high temperature, diarrhoea or vomiting has abated before coming back to Kindergarten. If in any doubt, please talk to a member of staff.

If your child is unwell in Kindergarten they will be kept in a quiet place with a member of staff until parents can collect them. Please ensure that you are contactable by phone.

Please check your child's head regularly for head lice and keep staff informed.

Complaints Procedure

Statement Of Intent

Our Kindergarten believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our service and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the Kindergarten. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved by an informal approach.

How to complain;

Stage 1

- Any parent who is uneasy about an aspect of their child's care or the kindergarten provision should, first of all approach Zanna who may be able to ease their worries with out further action needed.
- The basic outline of the comment or complaint is logged in the log book along with the action taken.

Most complaints should be able to be resolved informally at stage 1, if not parents/carers are free to contact Ofsted.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Area Child Protection Committee:-

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of our registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the National Standards for Day Care are adhered to.

The address and telephone number is:

Ofsted Early Years
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA
Telephone: 0845 404045

Policies and Procedure

A comprehensive collection of our policies and procedures are in a folder kept on the main table. Please feel free to look at these in Kindergarten. There is also a photo album which we encourage you to look at as it shows some of the life of kindergarten.

Collection Of Children Policy

- Kindergarten staff will not hand over a child to anyone other than the Parent/ Carer unless previous permission has been given.
- In an emergency Parents/ Carers may ask someone else to collect their child who is unknown to staff. If this happens you should inform the kindergarten and this person will be asked for ID or we can arrange a pass word.
- Children will be only handed over into the care of an adult over
 - the age of 16 years.
 - If an unknown person arrives to collect the child, nursery staff will ring the child's Parent/ Carer to gain permission. Kindergarten staff may refuse to hand over a child if they feel that the adult is not in fit condition to be responsible, for instance smells strongly of alcohol, is staggering or speech is slurred. In this instance the other parent or contact person will be contacted.

Lost Child Procedure

At St Albans Steiner Kindergarten we endeavour to ensure the safety and security of all children at all times. Gates to outdoor play are always locked, door handles are out of reach and children are supervised at all times.

In the event of a child going missing kindergarten staff will:

- Initiate immediate search of the premises, without causing undue stress.
- If the child is not found, someone will be appointed to search the surrounding area.
- If the child is still not found the police, parents/ carers and Manager will be informed.
- After the incident a written report will be sent to Ofsted.
- A full review of security procedures will be carried out.

Equal Opportunities

Our kindergarten is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families as already previously stated.

Language and attitudes that demean, degrade, or oppress individuals or sections of the community will not be tolerated and you could be asked to leave the Kindergarten.

Medicine Policy

If your child may require medication whilst they are in Kindergarten please sign a Kindergarten medical form and label the medicine. This is particularly relevant if your child suffers

with asthma or requires an epi-pen whilst they are in Kindergarten. An action plan must also be provided.

Inclusion

St Albans Steiner Kindergarten is committed to the identification and integration of children with additional needs. The kindergarten and the garden are assessable for everyone.

All children have the right to be educated and develop their full potential, every child matters.

Behaviour Management Policy

We aim to provide an environment in which children learn to respect themselves, other people and the environment. We use 'positive behaviour', not using the word 'naughty', but words like 'let's say sorry to our friends'.

All staff will receive training on behaviour management and will be required to be a positive role model of behaviour by treating, children, parents and one another with friendliness and respect.

Confidentiality Policy

It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents/ careers

It is also our intention to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all users of the centre.

In situations regarding Child protection issues, the Child Protection Policy/ procedures become the overriding policy on confidentiality.

Child Protection Policy

St Albans Steiner Kindergarten believes that the welfare of the child is always paramount. We seek to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Cause For Concern

All adults within the kindergarten staff have the responsibility to be aware of and alert to signs that all is not well with a child. Any concerns about a child's behaviour, general physical well-being or suspicious injuries should be discussed with Zanna. These concerns will be regarded and Childrens' Services could be contacted.

If a translation is required, please ask a member of staff.