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Welcome to Whitley Lodge Under Fives

The Committee and Staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your family to Whitley Lodge Under Fives. We look forward to getting to know you and hope you will enjoy your time with us. At Whitley Lodge Under Fives we are committed to providing a safe, stimulating and caring environment, where learning is fun and children can enjoy social interaction with their peers. We are sensitive to children's individual needs and encourage them to reach their full potential at their own pace. We work in partnership with parents to provide a quality pre-school experience. Starting Pre-school is a big step both for children and for their families. The information in this pack is intended to help make it a successful and happy time.

About Whitley Lodge Under Fives

Whitley Lodge Under Fives is made up of a sessional Pre-school (sometimes called Playgroup) which meets daily and a Toddler group which meets on some afternoons.

Session times

Monday	9.00 – 12 Noon	Pre-school
Tuesday	9.00 – 12 Noon 1.30 – 3.00pm	Pre-school Toddlers
Wednesday	9.00 – 12 Noon	Pre-school
Thursday	9.00 – 12 Noon	Pre-school
Friday	9.00 – 12 Noon 1.30 – 3.00pm	Pre-school Toddlers

Toddlers

The Toddler group caters for young children from birth upwards and their parents and carers who want to meet and interact with other children and parents and carers. This is a friendly and informal group where both children and adults can forge lasting friendships. Rachael Robinson organises Toddler sessions offering some structured play activities and many opportunities for free play. The children remain the responsibility of the parents or carers throughout these sessions. A small fee is charged to cover costs and refreshments.

Whitley Lodge Pre-school (Playgroup)

The Pre-school is well established and has developed a good working relationship with the school, nursery and wraparound (Zone4Kids). We have places in each session for 18 children aged between 2 years and 4 years.

Curriculum – Learning through Play

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum published by DFE (Department for Education) which emphasises the importance of learning through play. A copy of this is available on request also further information can be at What-to-expect-in-the-EYFS-complete-FINAL-16.09-compressed.pdf (foundationyears.org.uk) The staff have regular planning meetings, where weekly activities are selected, following children's interests and providing the opportunity to learn and develop skills linked to our Curriculum. Children will be given opportunities to learn through playing with various materials such as paint, junk, dough, water and sand. Construction play with blocks, stickle bricks and other building toys also provide a great deal of enjoyment and opportunities for learning. Children love to dress up and

pretend in their play and this will be encouraged. Books and stories are available at every session. Your child will be encouraged to interact with other children and adults within the group, which will help to prepare him/her for nursery or school. Activities are planned to the Early Years Foundation Stage. All equipment and resources are chosen to be high quality, age appropriate, safe and non-toxic and linked to our curriculum. Please welcome the paintings or work your child might bring home, but do not assume that a child who brings nothing home has not been busy. We have the services of a Ready for School Quality Improvement Officer from the Local Authority to help us to meet the requirements of inspection by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education). Our most recent inspection report dated 4/5/23 is displayed in the lobby or available on www.ofsted.gov.uk. Our Ofsted number is 310255.

Keyperson

We operate a Keyperson system in our Pre-school. A Keyperson, whilst still interacting with all children is specifically responsible for monitoring and recording their key children's achievements and 'Wow' moments on Tapestry(online Learning Journey) This makes them the ideal person to liaise with parents.

Staffing

The Pre-school employs four members of staff all of whom are experienced in working with children. The group encourages staff to attend ongoing training. Staff and regular volunteers all undergo various checks, including DBS to ensure suitability. The sessions are staffed at the ratio of one staff member to four/five children under three years and one staff member to eight children over three years. In every session there is a Level 3 Leader and a named Deputy. Staff photos and the staffing rota are displayed in the lobby. We sometimes have

volunteer helpers and students on placement in the group, but they are not counted in the adult: child ratios. On outings ratios are one member of staff to two unaccompanied children.

Mrs Cameron
Level 3
Manager
Safeguarding Lead
SENDCo

Mrs Potts
Level 3
Deputy Manager
Health and Safety
Deputy Safeguarding

Mrs Pronk
Level 6
Equality and Diversity

Mrs Kennedy
Level 3
Behaviour Management

Fees

Fees from April 26 are £7.72 per hour. Fees are reviewed annually in April. You will receive a half-term bill within the first two weeks of each half-term and you should pay the outstanding amount by bank transfer no later than the due date on the bill (40-46-28 51180517). Refunds are not made for absences as the running expenses are the same. No refund will be made if the child leaves playgroup at any time during a half-term and we require a half term's notice. If at any time you should have difficulty in paying the fees, please contact the Manager or a committee member (listed on the wall in Playgroup). Children whose third birthday falls before the 31st December 2025 or 31st March 2026 may access up to 15 hours universal funding or 30 hours of free childcare, commencing in the term following their third birthday. 30 hours funding is for children whose parent/parents meet the funding criteria. Funding is also available for children aged two years who meet the funding criteria. Further information about this and tax-free childcare can be found on the Best Start In Life website [Best Start in Life - Best Start in Life](#) We accept payment by various childcare vouchers. Our Ofsted number is 310255.

Parent participation - getting involved

We welcome help in many ways, these include gardening, repairing toys, painting etc. At various times during the year we welcome parents/carers/family members to come in who may bring knowledge/experience to supplement our curriculum e.g. during 'People who help us', 'Transport', 'Vets'. We will relay any information requesting parent participation by email and Tapestry. We also welcome parents to join our committee, please see page 7 for more information on this.

Whitley Lodge Under Fives Committee

We are a Committee run group with charitable status managed by the parents of the children attending the group. At the Annual General Meeting every autumn a new Committee is elected from amongst the parents to administer and be responsible for the policy and finances of the group. The Officers of the Committee become the Trustees of the Pre-School for the duration of their time on the Committee. We need all parents to be involved and we value your ideas and welcome your help in whatever way you can give it. Although we receive some two and three year funding and fees for younger children, we do from time to time hold fundraising events to provide new equipment and to subsidise parties and outings. A list of Committee members is displayed on the wall. A Committee meeting is usually held each half term. Any ideas can be shared with a member of staff or Committee or a suggestion box is available. We also request feedback via parents' questionnaires

Birthdays

A small birthday celebration will be held for your child during the session nearest to their birthday. It has become customary to bring in a small treat for the children on these occasions, but in line with our Healthy Eating Policy these are given to the children to take home for consumption at their parents' discretion.

Settling in

You are encouraged to bring your child to visit the group before he/she actually starts. This is usually done by means of attending our Open Afternoon. Prior to your child starting at the Playgroup you will be required to complete a registration form giving personal details about your child, contact telephone

number etc. This information is essential for the well being of your child and all information will be kept confidential. On your child's first day the Leader will talk to you at the door/in the outside classroom to ensure that all the information on the completed registration form is still relevant. Your child's keyperson will be introduced to both you and your child. Your child says goodbye and is then taken into the classroom. Some children find it comforting to bring a toy or teddy from home, but such items should not be too precious, as inevitably there is a risk of loss or damage. We do not welcome guns or aggressive toys. Every effort is made to make this time as easy and happy as possible and you can rest assured that we will ring you on that first morning to let you know how your child is doing.

Arrival

If you arrive before the starting time please wait in the outside classroom. At 9am a member of staff will open the door and welcome your child into the setting. Each child will be given a named coat peg.

Registration

All children are recorded in our register that is taken at the door. The register is then double checked by another member of staff so that we can be assured we have the correct children recorded should we need to evacuate the building for any reason. Adult visitors will be asked to sign in and out of the Visitors Book.

Collecting your child

If you know that you are going to be late, please let a member of staff know as your child could become distressed. You can contact us on 07863057285 in an emergency or in case of last minute delays. You will be asked to give details and contact numbers of anyone who has permission to collect your child from playgroup. If someone other than yourself will be collecting your child, please inform the Leader, so that it can be noted in the diary. In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a pre-school session we will put into practice agreed procedures from our Non-collection of Children Policy (see full policy on our website) We will endeavour to contact your authorised emergency contacts but if unable to do so after one hour we will contact our local authority social services department (Tel: 0345 2000109) and inform Ofsted. Do ensure that any paintings or other work your child has done is taken home, but please check that you take only your child's work, as mistakes of this kind are very upsetting to children. If there are any notices or letters they will be distributed with your child's work or handed out at the start or end of session. Please wait for your child to be handed to you. This is in the interest of your child's safety. If you wish to discuss your child and exchange information with staff, please wait until all children have been collected. Each day's activities and snack are displayed on the outdoor notice board and uploaded on to Tapestry so that you can discuss these with your child.

Session routine within Pre-school

9.00am	Arrival/registration/wash hands
9.00 – 10.20am	Children choose from a variety of free and structured play activities
10.20 – 10.30am	Tidy up time. Wake up shake up
10.30 – 10.40am	Talk time – large group
10.40 – 11.00am	Wash hands and snack time
11.00 – 11.10am	Weather, day and register
11.10 – 11.40am	Large physical play
11.40 – 12 Noon	Story and song time – large group
12 Noon	Collection

We are flexible to accommodate spontaneous learning opportunities. All play activities take place both indoors and outside.

Toilet

Please inform us if your child uses the toilet or is in nappies. It will be helpful if your child wears clothes that are easy to deal with at the toilet (e.g. not dungarees) although the staff will give help when necessary. Please tell us if your child has any special name for the toilet, prefers the potty, or requires assistance. We are happy to work with you if you are trying toilet training. Only adults who have had the relevant checks will be allowed to accompany your child to the toilet. If your child requires nappies please leave changing materials on his/her peg. A tag will be placed on your child's peg if they have been changed.

Clothes

We recommend that older clothing be worn. Plastic aprons are provided for messy activities but some children refuse to wear them. Paint and glue do usually wash out. We have Whitley Lodge Under Fives sweatshirts and T-shirts available for sale. Please name clothing, particularly shoes and coats. Lost property which is not named will be put into the Lost Property box. Please provide a named bag with nappies and wipes (if needed) and a change of clothing. Please do not leave sweets, food, medicines, drinks or creams in your child's bag; these must be handed to a member of staff for safekeeping. In the interest of safety we ask that you do not permit your child to wear jewellery to the session, particularly earrings which hang down. We try to take the children outside every day, weather permitting so please ensure your child has outdoor clothes with them.

Refreshments

Free milk is provided and fresh drinking water is available at all times. Please do not allow your child to bring in sweets. The group aims to promote healthy eating habits and your child will be offered a different snack each day including fruit, crackers, breadsticks and vegetables. Please inform a member of staff if your child has any special dietary requirements or food preferences so that these can be catered for. Please see our Healthy Eating/ Health and Safety policy on website/in lobby.

Policies

Full copies of our policies and procedures are on display in the lobby and on our website. These policies and procedures are under continual assessment by both staff and Committee and will be revised regularly. Our policies aim to ensure good practice. A brief summary of some of the key policies follows:

Admissions

The Pre-school is open to every family in the community. A waiting list is operated. Children are not admitted before the age of two years. When allocating places to children this is not done on a purely first come, first served basis but consideration is given to the ages and needs of the children. Every attempt is made to accommodate families who move into the area despite the fact that they may not have been on the waiting list. An open day is held in May/June each year for those families whose children will be starting during the following school year. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate your child in your chosen sessions we cannot guarantee this. If demand for sessions exceeds availability of sessions we will follow our admissions policy.

Behaviour

Children are encouraged to develop self-discipline and a respect for the needs of others. Positive methods of guidance are used which include redirection, anticipation of potential problems and lots of praise and encouragement. Humiliating punishments such as the naughty corner are not used. Any inappropriate behaviour will be discussed with the child's parents and strategies for handling this agreed.

Safeguarding Children

Staff members are aware that child abuse/protection is an emotive issue but are also conscious that their first responsibility is the well-being of the child. If, therefore, they have any concerns about a child, they will first discuss this with the child and parents/carer (if appropriate), but are also aware of reporting procedures if they feel this is necessary. See the guide to sharing information:

[Children and young person guide to working together to safeguard children 2026.pdf](#). This does not mean that you need worry if your child has a cut or bruise, we are all aware of the normal rough and tumble of a child's life, it is just to reassure you that at all times we will protect your child's welfare. If you are aware that your child has an existing injury please inform the Leader on arrival, who will complete a Home Accident/Incident record. All members of staff and students on placement undergo the necessary background and reference checks. If a child is absent for a session and we have not received an email or phone call from parent/carer to inform us why the child is absent, then the manager will call on the same morning to find out the reason why the child has not attended the session (see attendance policy on our website)

Procedures for when a child leaves the group unaccompanied

Stringent systems are in place for the protection of children and this should never happen. However, even in the best regulated settings, accidents may occur and there is a specified procedure (see above mentioned procedure displayed in the lobby and on the website)

Equality & Diversity/Special Needs

We welcome, value and respect **all** children, families, staff and volunteers. We aim, through attitudes, activities and equipment to present positive images of the diverse society in which we live. We aim to encourage tolerance of everyone regardless of race, religion, gender or disability and will challenge discrimination or stereotyping. We value our differences and feel they can enrich our experience. We aim to meet the needs of each individual child and if you feel that your child has additional needs please discuss this with the staff to establish how we may best meet these needs. There may be the

possibility of obtaining some additional support if this is felt to be appropriate. We also, with parental consent, work with outside agencies who are involved with individual children.

Fire drill/Emergency Evacuation Procedure/Lockdown drill

Fire drill procedures are displayed on the wall and children participate in the School Fire drill. In addition we hold regular Fire drills and Lockdown drills. Records of these are kept in the Fire drill Record book/Lockdown drill Record book. Your assistance is requested in ensuring that Fire Exits are kept clear at all times.

Health and safety

All children registered with the Pre-school are covered by our insurance policy. A certificate of Insurance is displayed in the cloakroom. First aid equipment is available and members of staff are trained in basic first aid. All accidents, however small, are recorded in the Accident Book and will be reported to you on your return. In the case of serious illness or accident every effort will be made to contact you (or an alternative nominated contact). If this is not possible the staff will obtain emergency treatment for the child (you will be requested to give your consent to this on the registration form). Children who are obviously unwell (e.g. vomiting or rashes) or who have been ill during the previous night should not be brought in for a minimum of 48 hours. Please inform a staff member if your child has an infectious disease so that other parents can be notified, and adhere to the recommended isolation periods. [Children and young people settings: tools and resources - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-and-young-people-settings-tools-and-resources) Please inform the Manager of any existing medical condition your child may have. If your child requires medication for illnesses such as asthma you will be asked to fill in a Healthcare plan and to supply the necessary medication.

Please see link below to the NHS Little Orange book which has useful information in regarding your child's health <https://nenc-northtyneside.icb.nhs.uk/your-health/the-little-orange-book/>

We implement a **no smoking/no vaping** policy in pre-school and smoking/vaping is not permitted in the Pre-school building, outside play area or anywhere on the school site

Problems/Complaints

We hope that your involvement with Whitley Lodge Under Fives will be satisfying and enjoyable but should any problems or complaints arise please do not hesitate to discuss these with either the Manager or with the Chair of the Committee. Our full complaints procedure is available in the Policies and Procedures file in the Lobby and on our website

To complain to Ofsted about a childcare provider email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or 0300 123 4666.

Inspection

The Pre-school is registered with Ofsted and undergoes a rigorous inspection to check that we meet all the requirements set out in the EYFS and our current rating is good, a copy of the report can be found here [50219463 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](#) and is also displayed in the cloakroom along with our registration certificate.

The Early Years Directorate of Ofsted is responsible for the registration and inspection of early years provision, handles queries and complaints and publishes information on all aspects of regulation.

The National Business Unit
Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 4666

Early Years Alliance

Our group belongs to the Early Years Alliance which supports us in a number of ways: - our insurance is arranged through them with Sun Alliance, we receive up to date information from the Early Years Alliance via email

Links with Whitley Lodge First School, Nursery, Zone4kids

We enjoy a good relationship with School, Nursery and Zone 4 Kids. We share the outside environment with Zone 4 Kids. The children are involved in some school/nursery activities and make visits to Nursery, which enables them to become familiar with both the building and staff.

Website

www.whitleylodgeunderfives.co.uk

Adults with parental responsibility

You will notice that all of our paperwork requires the signature of the parent/adult with parental responsibility, for your information there follows a definition.

Adults with parental responsibility – a person with parental responsibility for a child has rights and obligations for that child. Parental responsibility is acquired by:

- ❖ The mother at birth
- ❖ The father if he is married to the mother, at the point of birth or subsequent marriage
- ❖ The father, if not married, by formal written agreement with the mother or through a court order. A court can grant a father parental responsibility despite the mother's objections
- ❖ The father if he was registered as the child's father and if the registration took place after 1st December 2003 (amended by the 2005 Adoption and Children Act)
- ❖ Adoptive parents at adoption
- ❖ A third party e.g. grandparents, relatives, foster carers as result of a Residence Order (prior to the Adoption and Children Act 2005)
- ❖ A Local Authority where a Care Order is granted by the court
- ❖ Family or friend carer with a special guardianship order and parental responsibility is shared by carer and parents.