

September 2008

St George's Pre-school
St Georges Hall, Andover Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 6NU
Tel: 07887 900348



Registered Charity No 294204

Prospectus

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St. George's Pre-school is for children aged 2½ to 5. The pre-school is committed to preparing your child for compulsory education at the age of five in a caring and safe environment, where the emphasis is on having fun whilst learning the desired skills in all areas of the Early Years Curriculum. Children may attend up to five sessions per week, free of charge the term after their third birthday as their places are funded by the government.

St George's Pre-school is a registered charity and a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

This booklet describes the ethos and running of the pre-school.

“The children undertake a wide range of exciting and appropriate activities both inside and out”.

“The quality of teaching and learning is good.”

“Children have access to a varied selection of resources to support their learning. Staff use these resources appropriately during well planned sessions”.

A full copy of the latest OFSTED report may be found on the noticeboard.

- OFSTED Inspection Report
- July 2005

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History of our group

The pre-school was opened on 2nd February, 1968 (then South Newbury Playgroup). Since then the pre-school has had several different venues before moving to the wonderful premises that we now enjoy.

The pre-school belongs to the families who use it, and they are responsible for the way it is organised. Without parental involvement the pre-school would not succeed.

Running of the pre-school

The pre-school is run by parents through a committee, which is elected annually at the AGM in the autumn term. The committee consists of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and up to twelve others, most of whom are parents like yourselves. A representative of the staff is usually present at the committee meetings. The committee employs the staff that are responsible for all the children in their care and the day-to-day activities. The help and support of parents is essential to ensure not only the continuing success of the pre-school, but indeed its very existence. There is an expectation that all parents and carers of children attending the pre-school will contribute to its running through joining the committee and/or participating in fundraising events.

We are registered by OFSTED and are inspected regularly by OFSTED Inspectors. A copy of our Certificate of Registration is displayed on the notice board.

We are a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, a voluntary body that is registered as an educational charity, and we have adopted its constitution. A copy of the constitution is displayed on the notice board.

All our policies and procedures are held at the pre-school, and are available to be looked at on request.

Staff

A Supervisor, Deputy Supervisor and the necessary number of assistants employed by the committee are present at each session along with one or two duty parents, giving a high adult to child ratio. St. George's Pre-school is an equal opportunities employer. Each member of staff and each committee member has been checked by the Criminal Records Bureau. Any new members of staff, while waiting for police checks to be completed, are never left unsupervised with any child. All staff are given the opportunity to undertake appropriate training to update their skills and underpin their knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pre-school.

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Sessions

Pre-school meets at St. George's Church Hall, Andover Road, Newbury, and sessions are during school term time as follows:

Morning sessions

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 9.00am – 11.30am

Lunch clubs

Monday, Tuesday & Friday 11.30am – 12.30pm

Thursday 11.30am – 12.15pm

Afternoon session

Thursday 12.15pm – 2.45pm

There are up to 26 children at each session.

Fees

The current fee per session is detailed on the enrolment form. Our fees are of course subject to slight increases from time to time and you will be updated on any fee increase at the time a place becomes available for your child. Fees are payable termly or half-termly in advance. There is no refund of fees for non-attendance, but in special circumstances, such as long-term illness, fees may be refunded provided that the vacancy has been filled. In case of difficulty with the fees, please speak in confidence to the Treasurer or Supervisor.

Important You must give a half a term's notice in writing before removing a child from the pre-school.

We receive government funding for your child the term after their 3rd birthday. This entitles your child up to 38 weeks of free educational care per school year.

You don't need to apply for the funding, each term the pre-school tells the Local Education Authority who needs to be funded, based on the children's dates of birth. You will be given a short declaration form to fill in for each term's funding.

Aims and objectives

As a pre-school with strong links with our Local Education Authority schools, we aim to create an environment which has a distinctive level of care for all its members,

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one which recognises and values the unique contribution of each individual.

We aim to provide an environment, which is:

- Safe, secure and happy
- Caring
- Stimulating and well-planned

so that the full intellectual, social, physical and moral capabilities of each child are developed to their best potential.

We wish to equip each child with the knowledge, skills and attitudes for the next stage of their educational life.

We wish to encourage each child to:

- Communicate effectively
- Develop positive relationships with others
- Share and contribute
- Learn constructively
- Become independent individuals
- Work with others in a team
- Have self-confidence
- Have a high level of self-esteem
- Develop knowledge of themselves and the world
- Respect themselves
- Respect and understand other people's feelings, property, opinions, religion, abilities and disabilities
- Develop consideration and interest in others in the local, national and world community

We also offer your child:

- Individual care and attention made possible by a high ratio of adults to children.
- Fun and friendship with children and other adults
- The support of a personal key worker
- Opportunities for you and your family to be directly involved in the activities of the group and in your own child's progress

We aim to work in partnership and understanding with parents who will be encouraged to become actively involved in the work of the pre-school as an integral part of the local community by:

- Working in the group with the children, by taking your turn to assist with being Duty Helper. We hope parents and carers will use any skills they have to help with the pre-school
- Assisting with fundraising
- Taking part in the management of the pre-school by serving a period of time on the committee.

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We offer a curriculum structured upon the Early Learning Goals. We endorse the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's and the Department for Education and Employment's guidelines for the Early Years curriculum as adopted by the Pre-school Learning Alliance and support their policies for equal opportunities and racial equality.

Admissions

Pre-school places are open to every family in the community.

Important If your child attends another pre-school/nursery, we would ask that you let the Supervisor know, so that they can discuss with you the compatibility between our group and the setting that your child already attends.

Children are not eligible for a place before they are two and a half years of age, but you may register your child at any time by completing an enrolment form. There is no registration fee. Children are eligible to stay for the Lunch Club from three years of age.

The enrolment secretary will contact you, as soon as a place becomes available.

. As staff ratios are higher for children under three we only have a limited number of places for children between the ages of 2 and half years and three.

For children who are three and above the priority in terms of allocation of any available place is different. Priority is given to the oldest child on our waiting list regardless of when that child was registered with us. This means that a place could be offered to a four year old who has only just registered on our waiting list rather than a three year old who may have been registered for some time. This is a requirement of OFSTED on the basis that the nearer a child is to school age, the greater the need for pre-school education.

Starting at pre-school

The term before your child is due to start, you will be asked to come along to the pre-school with your child for visits, in order to familiarise your child with the staff and the new surroundings. It then makes it easier for the child to settle in the following term.

For children under three we recommend at least 2 visits, and for children over 3, 1 - 2 visits. During these visits the parent/carer will be expected to stay.

If you would like a home visit by a member of staff before your child starts this can be arranged.

A child who is tense or unhappy will not be able to play or learn properly, so it is important for parents and pre-school staff to work together to help the child to feel

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confident and secure in the group. It takes longer for some children than for others and parents should not feel worried if their child takes a while to settle.

When your child starts his or her first session you can leave him or her if happy. If your child is upset, we would ask you to help us settle him or her. It may be enough for you to sit with the child during registration and then leave, but if necessary please stay until the child feels secure and happy to stay with us.

What to wear

In order to feel free to explore and experiment with all kinds of materials, including messy ones, it is best to send children dressed in clothes which are easily washable e.g. jogging bottoms, or not too new (no jewellery). Your child should bring a spare set of clothes, in case of any mishaps, as well as suitable warm clothes for playing outside, e.g. coat, hat, gloves & wellies. Please could you make sure that all clothes are clearly labelled with your child's name.

It is good for children to practise the skills which will make them independent. Simple clothing that they can handle themselves will enable them to go to the toilet when they want to and to put on and take off their outdoor clothes without being too dependent on other people's help (Velcro fastenings on shoes).

We would like to point out that unfortunately pre-school cannot be held responsible for any items which are left in the cloakroom area.

What to bring

A drink of milk or water is provided for every child and therefore no other drink can be brought to pre-school unless there is a medical reason for this. If you would prefer your child to have a particular drink (eg. just water), please let a member of staff know. A snack is provided for your child. This is provided by the parent helpers and will be fruit or raw vegetables. No other snacks may be brought in unless your child is on a special diet for medical reasons. Please do not allow your child to bring sweets to pre-school.

Encourage your child to choose an item related to the weekly theme to bring to the session for the Interest Table. These items along with other activities and crafts form a basis for discussion with the children. The theme for each week can be found on the notice board, as well as details of the themes and activities for each term.

You may find it helpful for your child to bring a bag to pre-school. This can hold the item for the Interest Table and carry home paintings or other things made during the session. Please mark the bag with your child's name.

Pre-school routine

On arrival at the pre-school hang coat on hook with hanging card, name and picture and find name on strip and put on the name board. Each session starts with the children being given a numbered teddy bear as they come into the classroom. They then hand the bear to another member of staff to hang on a line. The children are then allowed to go and play. When the staff think that no more children will arrive, the front door is locked, and music is played. When the children hear the music, they go and sit down for circle. The staff discuss with the children the theme for the week. The children are encouraged to participate by showing things brought from home that are connected to the weekly theme. The children are told about all of the activities that they can do on that day.

Morning Sessions: The children are allowed to choose the activities that they want to do and the garden area is open throughout the session. There will always be a craft or structured activity. At the pre-school we run a cafeteria snack system. After helping to tidy up some of the toys the children will have Rhymes, singing and/or a story. After the story, the children collect their belongings from their trays and sit back down. Once the children are all sat back down quietly, a member of staff will open the door to the hall and then call over one child at a time and hand them over to their parent/carer.

Children staying for Lunch Club will have their story/singing in the room at the back of the hall, until the doors are re-locked, when they will be taken to wash their hands. After lunch, children will take part in free play.

Afternoon sessions: These follow a similar format to the morning sessions.

We believe that play is very important in each child's development and provide activities and learning opportunities which promote the growth of his or her physical, intellectual, imaginative, emotional, linguistic, moral and social skills in a safe, secure and stimulating environment. We aim to provide a varied curriculum and encourage the children to progress at their own rate through experiencing, observing, predicting, estimating, experimenting and coming to conclusions free from the stigma of failure. We provide play activities and equipment, which give all children equal opportunities and reflect the multi-cultural nature of our society.

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Record keeping

We are required by law to keep full details of the children attending the pre-school. The information necessary will be transferred from the Registration Form, which we ask you to fill in.

Key workers

Our key worker system gives each member of staff particular responsibility for a small group of children. Each child in the group has one special adult to relate to, which can make settling into the group very much easier. In addition, the key worker is in a position to tailor the group's curriculum to the unique needs of each individual child. The key worker maintains links with the child's home setting, working with parents through shared record keeping to ensure that all children are supported reaching their full potential.

Records

Records for all funded children will be forwarded directly to their next school. All parents/carers are required to sign a consent form in order to pass the records on.

Communication

The staff are always happy to discuss your child's progress with you, and appointments will be made to see your child's key worker in the Summer term. If parents of funded children wish to see their child's records, these will be made available on request.

You will receive a monthly newsletter issued by the committee. This will keep you informed about pre-school news and give you details of forthcoming events. Please also keep an eye on the notice board, as it is there to keep you up to date with what is happening. At the start of each term, details of themes and activities will be put on the noticeboard.

If whilst your child is attending a Pre-school session you should need to contact the staff urgently, please ring:

07887 900348

This is the number of the pre-school mobile telephone and should only be used if the call is very important.

Parent Duty Roster

Research shows that children learn better when their parents are involved. Our Parent Duty Roster system involves all parents in helping in the group on a regular basis. This helps to maintain the high ratio of adults to children in our group, guaranteeing individual care and attention for each child. It also gives parents the opportunity to take an active part in the group to see what happens there and to talk about it afterwards with their child. In addition, the Parent Roster system provides a valuable opportunity for all children to see their own parents/carers in a new role.

We have up to four members of staff and one or two parents on roster duty at each session. You will be asked to do duty rosters as follows, depending on the number of sessions a week your child attends:

1 session a week	1 day max. per half term
2 sessions a week	2 days max. per half term
3 sessions a week	3 days max. per half term
4 sessions a week	4 days max. per half term
5 sessions a week	5 days max. per half term

One parent will also be required for duty during the Lunch Club.

The roster will be put in your child's tray at pre-school at the end of each half term ready for the next one.

It is perfectly acceptable for a dad, grandparent or carer to do the duty day instead of mum, providing that they are over 18 and under 65 years of age.

Important

Parents/carers who have to bring along other children to the pre-school while they do their duty, will be responsible for them at all times.

We also ask parents/carers while on duty to use the disabled or men's toilets.

Certain people are exempt from doing their parent duty, as follows:

- **Any person who is on the sex offenders register**
- Mums in latter stages of pregnancy
- Nursing mums with babies under six months
- Mums whose children have just started pre-school (exempt for first half term to settle in)

Procedure:

1. If you are unable to do certain days of the week on a regular basis eg because you are a working mum, please contact the Roster Secretary as soon as possible so they can allocate your duties accordingly.
2. If you know in advance that you will be unable to do certain days during the

following half term eg due to booked holidays, please let the Roster Secretary know as soon as possible (ideally 3 weeks before the end of the previous half term). It is much easier to allocate duties around these dates when the roster is drawn up rather than making changes at a later date.

3. If you are unable to do an allocated duty once the roster has been published:
 - a. A responsible adult (eg grandparent) can do your session for you.
 - b. As soon as possible after the rota has been issued:
 - i. Swap with another parent by asking them directly. Please change the master copy on the notice board.
 - ii. If you cannot find another parent to swap contact the Roster Secretary.
 - c. If an emergency arises immediately before your allocated session eg your child falls ill, contact the Reserve Parent directly to request cover. In this instance you will be expected to cover a duty for the Reserve Parent at the earliest opportunity.
 - d. For a second 'no-show', dependent on the circumstances, a letter and a fine of £15 will be issued.
 - e. For repeat 'no-shows' the Pre-School Reserves the right to reallocate your child's place subject to circumstances and on agreement with the Committee.

A 'Parent Duty Contact List' with phone numbers is distributed amongst parents to enable you to easily contact other parents when you need to arrange to swap your duty.

Many parents ask what is expected of them when doing parent duty. Here are some guidelines and comments, which we hope you will find useful.

Arriving for Parent Duty Morning

We would be grateful if you would turn up at 08.45am, if possible, to help set up the equipment. Please go straight into the hall. Your child may go in with you and help put small things out.

During the AM/PM Session

- Arrive 15 minutes before session is due to start to help set up.
- Bring fruit or vegetable snack, enough for 1 portion per child, up to 28 children.
- Check if there are any children with allergies.
- Make drinks for staff.
- Help with activities as requested.
- At 09.15/12.45 prepare food and drink trolley ready for cafeteria to open at 9.45/1.15.
- Place the following on the trolley:
 - Cups

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- Jug of water and jug of milk
- Fruit/vegetable snack
- 2/3 large spoons
- stickers
- At 09.30/1.00 wipe and dettox tables and put on tablecloths.
- Make sure that the till is out on the small table for the children to put their names in.
- At 09.45/1.15 ring the bell to tell the children that the cafeteria is open, help children as and when they come to the cafeteria.
 - When a child comes to the cafeteria remind them to wash their hands.
Parents' helpers must not accompany the children to the toilets.
If you feel a child needs help please ask a member of staff to take them.
 - Once hands are washed the child finds their name and puts it in the till.
 - Help the child with snack and drink if needed but encourage the children to serve themselves.
 - Once they have finished the child puts their dirty plate and cup in the bowl.
 - Give the child a sticker so staff know they have had snack.
 - At 10.30/2.00 write a list of children's names that haven't had snack. The parent helper can find these children or ask a member of staff, remind the children that the cafeteria will be shutting in 10min.
 - At 10.45/2.25 shut the cafeteria.
- Make drinks for staff.
- After snack wipe clear and dettox tables and wash up cups.
- Wash paint/glue pots etc as requested.
- Help tidy up.
- At end of session please help children get items from their trays at collection time.
- On Fridays place all children's cups in a sink and sterilise for half an hour in Milton solution.
- Finish approximately 15 minutes after session has finished when everything has been cleared away and floor has been swept.
- Take tea towels home for washing.

Lunch Club

- Check if there are any children with allergies.
- Help set up tables for lunch.
- Make drinks for staff.
- Help children with their lunches.
- Clear and dettox tables and wash cups.
- Help with activities as requested.
- Finish when everything has been cleared away.
- Take tea towels home for washing.

Please enjoy your time with us and do not hesitate to ask a member of staff if you are unsure what to do. Please join in with the activities and have fun.

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Benefits of Parent Duty

- **The child** feels special on the day their parent is helping, learns to share the parent with other children and has shared experiences that may become talking points.
- **The parent** sees their child among other similar children. Finds out or is reassured about what happens in a session and has a chance to copy or contribute ideas and makes an important contribution to the group.
- **The group** gets to know the parents better and staff can explain to parents how the group works.

Equal Opportunities

All children and adults are welcome to the pre-school regardless of religion, race, means or ability.

Children have a right to learn in an environment free from prejudice and without discrimination. We promote positive images of people of both sexes and all ethnic groups with and without disabilities. We aim to meet the needs of all children in our care in accordance with their stage of development and value them as individuals. We try to provide opportunities for each child to explore his or her identity and to build on his or her self-esteem.

Children with special needs, like all other children, are admitted to the pre-school after consultation between parents, Supervisor and key worker.

Behaviour

We aim to help children to develop self-discipline and respect for others. Discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable in the pre-school.

Good discipline is maintained by the rapport developed between staff and children. No physical reprimand is acceptable by an adult in any situation.

The pre-school has safety rules that the children are helped to understand. These are to be upheld and if there is a lapse by a child, he or she will be reminded and have the situation explained if necessary.

In any case of misbehaviour, it will always be made clear to the child in question that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome. Children will be given praise, and adults will endorse behaviour, which the pre-school sees as desirable, such as kindness and willingness to share, so that there is no risk of children receiving adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.

When children behave unacceptably an adult will explain to them why their actions are unwelcome, and how they affect others in the pre-school. They will be helped to

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understand that their behaviour is inappropriate.

For further information please refer to our Behaviour Policy.

Health and safety

The health, safety and welfare of everyone in the pre-school are paramount at all times.

Accidents

All full time staff attend a First Aid course to gain a First Aid certificate. Any accident, however slight, is recorded in the Accident Book and this record is shown to the parent to be signed.

Treatment for minor accidents only, will be given.

If the accident is more serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent (or any other named emergency contact) as well as ringing 999. We ask that all parents complete, sign and return the Emergency Consent form, given out with the enrolment form.

Safe procedures are always carried out by the staff in case of injury or bleeding.

Medication

Any child on prescribed medication will need to have their parent or carer come in to administer it.

If emergency prescribed medication, eg. Asthma inhalers/epipens, is needed to be kept and administered by staff, signed authorisation must be given in advance. Please use the attached form to be obtained from the Supervisor. A record of any emergency medication administered will be kept by staff and signed by parent/carer. If specialist knowledge is required, staff involved in administering medication will receive training from a qualified health professional

Sun cream

During the summer the children sometimes go outside to play. As we are unable to apply sun cream within the group, please ensure that your child is adequately protected before coming to pre-school.

Illness

No child will be accepted at a session if unwell. No child should attend if he or she has had diarrhoea and/or vomiting within the preceding 48 hours.

A child must not attend if he or she has an infectious disease and where possible the Pre-school should be informed as to why the child is away.

The pre-school must be informed in the case of German Measles (Rubella) and chicken pox - parents will be informed if cases of these illnesses occur within the

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Pre-school.

Any allergies, past major illnesses, etc. should be reported to the pre-school - see Enrolment Form.

Parents will be informed of any persistent problems brought to the attention of the pre-school, e.g. head lice.

Hygiene

Basic hygiene rules are observed. All pre-school staff and children wash their hands after using the toilet and before handling food and drink.

Staff have been trained to deal with spillage of blood and other body fluids in a safe way at all times to avoid the risk of cross infection. All spillages of body fluid will be cleared up with a solution of 1:10 bleach: water and gloves will be worn when doing this.

Smoking is not permitted in any rooms or areas used by the children or in the kitchen during sessions.

Safety

Please note that children remain the responsibility of their parents or carers until the Supervisor opens the session and at the end of the session when each child is handed over to his or her parent or carer.

Equipment is checked regularly for safety. If you notice any hazards or problems with the equipment, please tell the staff or committee.

The children are made aware of rules made for their own safety, for example:

- No throwing of sand
- No dressing-up clothes on the climbing frame

Children are not allowed in the kitchen area.

If someone other than you will be collecting your child, you must tell the Supervisor before or at the beginning of the session. The Supervisor (or Deputy Supervisor) will make a note in the diary. Please note we will not release a child without prior notification.

If in an emergency a child is left in the hall after a session has ended, the staff will first try to contact any of the numbers supplied by the parents. If this has proved unsuccessful after 30 minutes, then the Social Services Duty Officer will be contacted.

Evacuation Procedures

Fire drills are carried out each half term and details are recorded. The following procedure is displayed on the notice board and parent helpers are asked to familiarise themselves with it.

In the event of a fire the following fire drill is carried out: -

- 1. The designated fire warden of the day will blow the whistle**
- 2. Do not stop to pick up personal belongings**
- 3. Everyone will stop what they are doing and move towards the fire exit nearest the front car park**
- 4. The fire warden will collect the register & phone**
- 5. The remaining staff and parent helpers will supervise the children out of the building**
- 6. The second member of staff in hall will check the toilets, kitchen and other areas of the hall.**
- 7. The children will be taken to either the church or the large meeting room**
- 8. The fire warden will call the register, while another member of staff telephones the fire brigade**
9. (a) During a practice Fire Drill, once the register has been called and everyone is accounted for, the children will then be escorted back into the building, where the register will be called again.

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(b) In the event of a real fire staff will phone parents to collect their children.

The hall is fitted with smoke alarms. Fire fighting apparatus is checked annually.

OUTSIDE FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire the following drill is carried out:-

1. Upon hearing the fire alarm staff member to blow the whistle.
2. Do not stop to pick up personal belongings.
3. Member of staff to shut outside door to stop children returning into building
4. Everyone will stop what they are doing and move towards the gate between the church and the church hall with the children.
5. The staff member will undo the gate and lead the children either to the church or large meeting room.

The fire warden will take the register, while another member of staff telephones the fire brigade.

In the event of the outside area needing to be evacuated the following drill is carried out:-

- 1. Staff member to blow the whistle.**
- 2. Everyone to stop what they are doing.**
- 3. One Staff member to guide children back into the hall and shut door behind themselves.**
- 4. Second staff member to check outside area for children and then return to building.**
- 5. Once all members of staff, parent helpers and children are in hall supervisor to call register, while another member of staff deals with the problem outside (phones relevant organisation)**

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Curriculum

St. George's Pre-school is registered with, and inspected by, the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and receives funding for nursery education from West Berkshire unitary authority. OFSTED inspects us on the quality of our educational provision; its most recent report is available for parents and carers to read.

The early years foundation stage of education is for 3 to 5 year olds. It underpins the National Curriculum, which starts with Key Stage 1 when children enter year 1 at school, after Reception.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of six areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

Early Learning Goals are specified for each area of learning. Most children reach these targets by the end of the Foundation Stage when they are in school.

Although there are six specified learning areas, young children do not compartmentalise their learning. They learn things in a holistic way and at their own rate. They do not, for example, decide to learn all about the mathematics involved when putting socks into pairs; they are just as likely to discuss the colour or texture or make up a story about socks.....they do not learn in neat areas!

The Foundation Stage acknowledges that young children develop at different rates. Each early learning goal has 'stepping stones' that enable children to make progress towards the goal. These help pre-school staff plan what each child needs to learn next. The Foundation Stage emphasises **play** as the means by which young children learn and make sense of the world around them. At St. George's we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum so that our children make progress towards all the early learning goals. A 'curriculum' is simply all the experiences, both planned and un-planned, which the children have whilst they are with us.

The aims of our curriculum are to:

- Develop independence and self confidence
- Develop social awareness
- Utilise the five senses
- Value all types of people and life-styles
- Stimulate imagination and creativity
- Enrich language
- Form the basis of mathematical understanding
- Help children understand and express their feelings

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- Develop clear speech
- Explore and enjoy natural and made materials
- Develop muscular control and manipulative skills
- Use symbols and patterns as a basis for reading and writing
- Create habits of listening and concentrating
- Gain an understanding of science and technology

Each term's curriculum is thoroughly planned and is usually based on a half-termly theme. Planning is displayed for parents and carers to see.

The Six Areas of Learning

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area is all about helping children become confident and to feel good about themselves. We help children separate from their carer and to feel secure within the pre-school. Gradually they get to know daily routines and what is, and is not, acceptable behaviour. Slowly, they begin to play collaboratively and to be part of both small and larger groups. Children become more and more independent as learners, making choices and decisions about their play. They are encouraged to develop their personal independence too; they learn to use the toilet by themselves, for example, and find and use tissues when needed. They begin to recognise that others' home lives are different from their own and that they may come from a variety of cultures or religions.

Communication, Language and Literacy

This area is made up of four parts: speaking, listening, pre and early reading skills and pre and early writing skills. Varied topics provide children with many new experiences, stimulating conversation and expanding vocabulary. Handling interesting artefacts, objects and natural materials provokes children's curiosity making them excited, interested and eager to learn so that they want to talk with each other and with the staff. They are encouraged to listen carefully during conversations and to stories and music, for example.

We foster a love of books and help children understand about letter sounds. This happens throughout sessions as staff emphasise sounds when naming objects or emphasise rhymes in words. Children learn that marks on paper have meaning. They begin to learn too, that they can make marks on paper to convey meaning. Paper and mark-making equipment are placed in all sorts of situations so that children 'write' for a purpose, for example, making a pretend shopping list when in the home corner. We help children develop an effective pencil grip. When they are ready to do so, they learn to form letters properly but first they have a wide range of experiences to develop their hand and finger dexterity.

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Problem solving, reasoning & numeracy

Special mathematical activities are planned weekly but mathematical learning takes place across all the other areas of learning too. Good progress in this area depends on practical, everyday experiences based around talking, seeing and doing. Children begin to hear and use early mathematical language in their play; for example, 'heavy' and 'light' when engaged in cooking activities. Ideas of simple calculation are experienced as they work out, for example, how many beakers are needed for snack time. They learn to recognise numbers, such as when completing jigsaw puzzles. They gain experience of shapes, sorting, matching and pattern making. Writing numbers is not one of the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

This area helps the children explore both the natural and man-made worlds around them. Topics form the basis of many first-hand experiences, which help children to gain an early understanding of:

- the passage of time
- their locality
- science
- design
- technology
- other life-styles

Children are able to explore both natural and man-made materials. They observe and experience the changing seasons and weather at first hand: compare items to see how they differ or are the same; find out how things work and what happens when things are heated or cooled. Children are encouraged to talk about their families and things which are important to them. They learn about their locality during walks in the local area to a pond and school, for example. Visitors come in to share information about their lives and jobs. Materials are supplied so children may learn how to cut, fold and join, to create models. Technological resources such as programmable toys and a P.C., are available to support children's learning.

Physical Development

In this area children are helped to develop their hand and finger dexterity and to develop mobility and control of their bodies when enjoying more vigorous physical activity. Activities are offered which encourage balancing, climbing, jumping, catching and throwing, for example. We are able to visit Falkland School to use their Adventure Play facilities. Children are helped to understand the differences that exercise makes to their bodies and why they need to keep healthy.

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Creative Development

In this area children are provided with a wide range of materials, which stimulate all their senses. They use real tools and implements, and are shown new techniques such as printing or bubble painting. They are encouraged to use materials in the ways they wish, so that they may express their own ideas and feelings. Children are encouraged to be imaginative not only in their artwork but also in drama, role-play, dance and music.

Policies

If you wish to view all our policy statements, they are available on request.

All our policies are designed to offer the best possible experience for the children and families in the group. Our policies are reviewed on a regular basis and comments and suggestions from parents are always welcome.

Special educational needs

We aim to provide equality of opportunity for all members of our group, and this includes children with special educational needs. The number of adults present in the pre-school enables us to provide individual attention for each child. Each child is able to progress at his/her own rate in all areas of development, and this is true for children with and without disabilities or learning difficulties. We are experienced in working in close liaison with professionals across the range of special needs, and we operate in accordance with the governments Code of Practice on special educational needs. If you would like to discuss the group's ability to meet your own child's needs, please speak to the Supervisor or your child's key worker

Staff

Supervisor	Lorraine Forkin
Deputy Supervisor	Nicky Harris
Pre-school Assistant	Jennifer Hill
Pre-school Assistant	Helen Drake
Pre-school Assistant	Kirstie Rainbow
Pre-school Assistant	Lisa Dyke

We also have a number of bank staff whom we use regularly according to the number of children attending each session.

All full time staff attend a first aid course in order to gain a certificate.

Training

Our membership of the Pre-school Learning Alliance ensures that we are constantly in touch with new thinking in the field of child education and care. We receive a monthly magazine offering practical advice and up-to-date information, and have access to a range of professionally produced publications. In addition ongoing training is available through both the Pre-school Learning Alliance and West Berkshire Council.

Management and administration - decision making

The pre-school is run by an elected committee which ensures that major decision making is in the hands of the parents who use the group. The committee is responsible for reviewing both policy and practice, and for employment and appraisal of staff members. Our Annual General Meeting, at which the committee for the following year is elected, is held in the Autumn Term, and parents will be informed in good time so they are able to attend.

All parents are welcome and indeed encouraged to attend the committee meetings which are held on a monthly basis. If you are unable to attend but have a particular issue which you believe should be discussed, please set this out in writing and pass it to the chairperson prior to a committee meeting.

Fees

The current fees per session are set out in the enrolment form.

We receive government funding for your child the term after their 3rd birthday. This entitles your child up to 38 weeks of free educational care per school year.

You don't need to apply for the funding. Each term the pre-school tells the Local Education Authority who needs to be funded, based on the children's dates of birth. You will be given a short declaration form to fill in for each term's funding.

Complaints procedure

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family, and a caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play.

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with

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parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

Making concerns known

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provision should first of all talk over any worries and anxieties with the pre-school supervisor.

Meeting

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within a couple of weeks, or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the supervisor and the chairperson of the committee. Both the parent and the supervisor should have a friend or partner present if required and an agreed record of the discussion should be made, using the 'Provider complaints record' form .

Most complaints should be resolved informally at this initial stage.

Mediator

If the matter is still not sorted out to the parent's satisfaction, the parent should again contact the chairperson.

If parent and group cannot reach agreement, it might be helpful to invite an external mediator, or one who is acceptable to both parties, to listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to clarify the situation. West Berks EYDCP staff and/or staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance will be available to act as mediator if both parties wish it.

- The Mediator will help define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- The Mediator will keep all discussions confidential. They will meet with the group if required and will keep an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and any advice given.

The Role of the Registering Authority

In some circumstances, it will be necessary to bring in an OFSTED registration and inspection unit, who have a duty to ensure laid down requirements are adhered to and with whom West Berks EYDCP and the Pre-school Learning Alliance works in partnership to encourage high standards. The registering authority would be involved if a child appeared to be at risk or where there seemed to be a possible breach of registration requirements. In these cases both parents and pre-school

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would be informed and the West Berks Childcare Development worker would work with OFSTED to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

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 of our OFSTED regional centre are:

Early Years
OFSTED
Dukes Court, Dukes Street
Woking
Surrey GU21 5EP
0845 6014771

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the pre-school and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

An account of the findings of the investigation and any action taken will be shared with parents at the setting within 28 days, using the completed complaint record form. Where appropriate, a more detailed letter will be sent to the parents who made the complaint.