

STARTING PRE-SCHOOL : Settling in is a process which is individual to each child. We do have a settling in process which is easily adaptable, including a taster session(s). In the beginning, this can be a difficult time for some children who are shy or maybe unsure of separation. Parents are advised to discuss with the Lead and Deputy Practitioners how their children may best be helped to settle into Pre-school.

THE PRE-SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT : The setting is arranged into different activity areas which support your child's holistic development. Both child initiated play and adult-led activities are offered. Activities are offered in differing combinations and include: play dough, jigsaw puzzles, construction toys and games, a creative station, role play corner, book area, trains, cars and technology. We have access to St Joseph's Catholic Primary school's hall and field and use these for Physical Development (PD) sessions. We also have plenty of outdoor space which we share with YR class at the School.

THE PRE-SCHOOL TIMETABLE

Arrival: Pre-school opens at 08.55am and, as it is sited on school premises, it is often busy in the mornings. Parents are requested to wait outside the Primary School's staff carpark gate until the Lead Practitioner and her staff are available to accept your child. At the start of a session, the children will all self-register before sitting down together for registration and morning circle time.

Early Years staff will sign your child in at the start of the session and out again on collection.

Physical activity: PD sessions take place every morning. Games and adult-led activities as well as child led exploring takes place in the school hall or outdoors in finer weather.

Free play and group activities: The children are then able to participate in independent or group play as well as adult-led activities in which the children will participate in a topic themed activity. The children move between these structured activities and the free play activities as previously mentioned. The Pre-school staff will encourage and scaffold the children so that each child gains individually from the activities in which they engage.

Tidy-up time: All the children are encouraged to help tidy the room in time for snack or lunch time.

Snacks: The children sit together with the staff for their snack, eg. crackers, fruit, milk or water. The children learn to spread their crackers, pour their own drinks and pass items around the table to each other. They are encouraged to talk and listen to each other and this becomes a very sociable part of their morning. Snacks are provided by parents on a rota basis.

Home time: The children join together in the book area to sing, talk about the day and to say 'goodbye'. Pre-school closes at 2.55pm. Parents/carers are requested to wait outside the Primary School's staff carpark gate. The Lead Practitioner and her staff will bring your child to the gate and release them into your care. If you or your regular carer is unable to collect your child, please inform the Lead/Deputy Practitioners who will be coming to collect your child and ensure they know your password.

INVOLVEMENT WITH ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL : St Joseph's Pre-school have good relationships with St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. Daily the pre-school access the school field to use the trim trail paid for by all parties involved with the site, including the pre-school. Each academic year the Lead Practitioner works closely with the Reception teacher and Senior Leadership Team to tailor a transition programme individualised to the year group transitioning. This can involve attending class sessions, lunchtime hall visits and meetings.

CLOTHING : The Pre-school uniform (not compulsory), a blue jumper and white polo shirt, both with the Pre-school logo on, can be purchased from Bateman's in Stroud or used clothing can be bought from the Pre-school – ask the Practitioners. Please ensure your child has a pair of wellington boots at the Pre-school – we go out whatever the weather. All items must be labelled with your child's name.

SUPERVISION AND SAFETY : The safety of each child is of paramount importance to us. The legal ratio of children to adults is 8:1 3-4 year olds or 4:1 2 year olds for our general and Deputy Practitioners. Our Lead Practitioner is able to have 13:1 3-4 year olds. We keep under this ratio, however, ensuring we are well supervised at all times.

The outer doors of the school are kept locked. Should a parent arrive at Pre-school outside of the usual arrival and departure times, they should ring the external bell at the Leigh Building. The Practitioners undertake regular fire drills with the children in order to reduce any anxiety experienced by the children should a genuine need to evacuate the premises occur.

TOYS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST : Sometimes bringing a favourite toy helps a child to settle in and they like to show the rest of the group. The children are encouraged to bring items for 'Show and Tell' where they are given the opportunity to talk about these. They are encouraged to leave their toys or 'treasurers' in the safe tray when they enter the setting, this can be easily located at the end of the session.

HOW THE PRE-SCHOOL IS RUN : All parents of attending children are members of the Pre-school committee and are invited to participate in the running of the group. The committee officers are elected annually and a list of committee officers can be found on the Pre-school's section of the Primary School's [website](#), together with the settings policies and procedures and constitution.

FEES : A refundable deposit of £25 required to secure your child's place at the setting. For more than one child joining at the same time, eg. twins, then the deposit for the second child, and any subsequent siblings, is £12.50. For children not in receipt of nursery funding or attending hours over and above their nursery funding entitlement, there is a charge of £4.95 per hour. Nappy-wearing children's invoice include a mandatory charge of £10/half-term to cover the cost of nappy disposal (in line with Government requirements), and to reflect increased demands on staff time.

NEWS : The Lead Practitioner circulates a newsletter termly. In addition, the Pre-school has a private Facebook page (*St Joseph's Pre-school: Parents and Practitioners*) which you will be invited to join when your child starts at the setting. The Facebook page will keep you abreast of what the children have been doing, committee meetings, inset days and fundraising events..