

Choosing which type of Pre-School education you wish your child to have is a very important part of their development. This prospectus will hopefully give you all the necessary details, and answer any questions you may have about our Playgroup.

We are members of the Pre-School Alliance and are registered with Ofsted for 34 children per session. There are always at least five members of staff on duty at every session, the Manager and four assistants

Our Manager and Supervisor are trained to a level that complies with registration requirements, and all our assistants have a least one relevant qualification, which are updated as necessary.

A GENERAL OUTLINE

Southgate West Playgroup, is a community run playgroup and was started about 1970 by parents that had connections with Southgate West First and Middle Schools. The playgroup is controlled by a committee of parents,(elected every year) who with the staff run the group as a non-profit making enterprise for the benefit of the local community.

We are registered with the Charities Commission (No. 1022363) and all the fundraising profits are used to support the group and improve its resources. We do need the help of parents/carers whether it be on the committee or helping at playgroup and fund raising events. New ideas and suggestions are always welcome.

Children can start at our Playgroup when they reach 3 years of age. Sessions are held Monday to Friday mornings from 9.00am -12.00pm and the afternoon sessions are 12.30- 3.30pm with the introduction of the 30 hr. funding we also offer all day sessions 9.00am – 3.30pm. We are situated in the grounds of Hilltop Primary school in our purpose built accommodation. In the building we have a large classroom, kitchen, office, toilet facilities (for the children and disabled). We have disabled access and secure entry doors. In our fenced outside area we have a hard standing, with canopy and an artificial grass area, which means it can be used all year round.

Our aim is to enhance the development and education of the children under the statutory school age, in a parent involving community based group, and provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment. We know that parents/carers are the first and most important educators of their young children, and children learn better when their parents are involved. Therefore we run a Parent Rota system at playgroup where parents/carers (grandparents) can put their names down to help at a session that their child is attending.

A FEW RULES FOR PARENTS

The children attending playgroup are only covered by our insurance policy between the hours of 9.00am-3.30pm, therefore prompt pickups after playgroup are most important. The staff have to set up and clear away before and after these times (plus eat if possible) and cannot be expected to supervise children as this would invalidate the terms of the policy. Most children are now covered by the 15hrs Free entitlement, but this starts in the term after your child turns the age of three. Eg. If a child's birthday is in August they will be funded from September, but if your child is three in September they will not be funded until January. If you are one of the unfortunate ones that have to pay, a session costs £12.00 for the 3 hours. Prompt payment of the fees is appreciated as we have to cover our running costs. Extended non-payment of fees could result in your child losing their place at playgroup.

You can also apply for the 30hr funding if you wish your child to attend full time or more hours than the 15hrs free entitlement allows. Parents have to apply for this themselves, and there are a few criteria which have to be met. If successful you will be given a code to bring into Playgroup. The children that attend all day are doing a 6 and a half hour day so there is a charge of £2 per day to cover this.

We would ask that you do not send a child to playgroup who is ill or has been ill in the past 48hrs. Please inform us of any contagious diseases they may have contracted e.g. German Measles or Chicken Pox. We also need to know if there is a case of head lice or thread worms. These seem to be very common these days (but very easily treated) so do not feel worried about informing staff, there is no stigma attached, but we do need to inform other parents in confidence if there is a case at playgroup.

We provide milk or water at playgroup plus plain crackers or breadsticks and fruit to help promote healthy eating, which we feel is important to start at this age. Children are allowed to bring in their own drinks if they don't like milk, but these must be still drinks and in a container they can easily drink out of, and be clearly marked with the child's name. No other food or drink should be brought in unless for medical reasons and on prior agreement. We provide a fruit bowl for parents to donate a piece of fruit that can be given to the children during the sessions.

Children staying to lunch bring in their own labelled lunch box. We encourage parents to make this as healthy as possible.

STARTING AT PLAYGROUP

Some children settle into playgroup as if they have been attending for years, for others it can be rather a harrowing experience. It is important for parents and staff to work together to help the child feel confident and secure in the group. Parents shouldn't feel worried if their child takes a while to settle. Assistance will always be given by the staff, and each child is allocated a key worker.

What to wear

So that your child can enjoy and experiment with all kinds of materials, sometimes messy ones, it is best to send children dressed in clothes that are easily washed and not too new.

It is also good for the children to practice the skill that will make them more independent.

Simple clothing that they can handle themselves, will enable them to go to the toilet when they want to, and put on and take off their outdoor clothes without needing too much help. If your child is in nappies or pull ups could you please send them in with spares in a bag. Soft soled shoes are better in the classroom, as the floor can get a little slippery.

We do have a playgroup T.shirt £7.50 and a sweatshirt £9.00, but these are in no way compulsory.

A NORMAL SESSION AT PLAYGROUP

At 9.00am/12.30pm the children come into playgroup and say goodbye to the person who has brought them in, they find the peg with their name on to hang up their coats, they then self register themselves by finding their own names on a fish shaped label on a Velcro strip in the cloakroom, this they place on a board that looks like the sea (While the Covid restrictions are in place, no parents are allowed in the setting and the children will be met at the door by a member of staff who will put hand sanitiser on the children's hands, their temperature will also be taken) they then go and sit on the carpet where the Supervisor takes the main register. She will then explain what resources are already out and ask what else they would like to play with. Resources provided are linked to the previous days interests and to cover the next steps in their learning.

There is always a selection of apparatus such as construction toys, climbing frame or the ball pond amongst many others.

The children are left to play on whatever they choose, or work with the staff. There should be free flow into the garden area, which we try and accommodate, but as it means the door has to be left open all the time, it is not always practicable. About 10.30am/2.00pm we have a quick tidy up, then all the children wash their hands before settling down for drinks, snacks and story time. This can be in the form of reading from books, CD's, TV or just imagination.

There is free play then until about 20 minutes before the end of the session, when the children tidy up and then join in group activities such as action songs or games. The children going home will collect their coats and sit on the carpet to wait to be called when their parents have arrived to collect them. The children staying to lunch will go and wash their hands and then sit at a table to eat, the staff eat with them.

Sometimes we have special visitors to playgroup e.g. Community Policeman or Fire

Brigade. Also Sing and Sign or parents who have got jobs that the children would find interesting, come in and give a short talk.

We are also invited to join the children at Hilltop Primary School on special occasions like Harvest Festival or the Christmas production.

In the Summer we arrange an outing and all parents/carers are encouraged to accompany their children.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Our playgroup is open to every family in the community, without exclusion to ability, race or culture.

We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with our playgroup, have an equal chance to do so.

When choosing staff we would always try to appoint the right person for the right job and treat all applicants fairly.

The playgroup tries to show respectful awareness of major events in the lives of the children and families, such as festivals.

We encourage children to explore in a positive way the differences and diversity of people, by ensuring the presentations of people are accurate and realistic, with multi-cultural dolls, puzzles and dressing up clothes

Discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable at playgroup, our response will aim to be sensitive to feelings of the victim(s), and help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We aim to provide a clean and safe environment for your child to explore and play in, and all staff are First Aid trained . Our First Aid is box is checked regularly to make sure it complies with any new regulations, and that the dressings are all within their life date.

All children are supervised by adults at all times, and will always be in sight of an adult. The entrance into playgroup is through a security door which can only be opened by a keypad or from inside the office, so staff can verify the identity of any visitor.

Playgroup fire drills are practiced every half term and we join the school when they hold theirs.

Activities such as cooking, woodwork and energetic play receive close and constant supervision.

If there are any slight accidents at playgroup the child is treated and an entry made in the accident book. The child's parent/carers will be informed of the accident and asked to sign the book.

We ask parents/carers to inform us when the child starts playgroup if they have any illness or allergies the staff should be aware of.

FIRE DRILL

Fire drill is held once every half term, at every session for a week.

The fire bell will be activated by the fire officer (all members of staff take a turn at this role, the position is decided at the beginning of each session) who picks up the register. The children go to this person and follow them out of the door into the garden, where they congregate at the back fence. In the meantime another member of staff will check that everybody is out of the building. The fire officer tells the other members of staff the number of children and adults present that day, a head count is done and agreed before the register is taken. The children and adults return to the classroom, where the head count and register is taken again.

The fire officer explains why this practice fire drill has taken place and with reassurance and praise sends the children to their various activities again.

We alternate the fire drills using both ends of the building.

When the school have a fire drill the real fire bell is rung, and the playgroup children will leave the classroom and congregate with all the school children at their assembly point on the field at the back of the school. A member of staff will also take out all the necessary items as with our own practice.

In the case of a real fire the fire officer will phone the fire brigade and the other members of staff will check all the children are out and accounted for. The staff will then contact all the parents.

PLACE OF OPTIMUM SAFETY

In the event of evacuation from the playgroup building, our place of optimum safety will be the school as long as it is not affected by the problem. If the school is the actual point of danger, we will walk the children to the Rainbow Pre-school building attached to Southgate Primary School.

PROCEDURE TAKEN WHEN A CHILD NEEDS EMERGENCY

TREATMENT

The member of staff who witnesses the accident/incident, will take the child (if appropriate) to the office. In the case of minor injury, the member of staff will give reassurance and deal with the injury as necessary. The time, date, child's name and details of the accident/incident will be written on the child's personal accident form by the member of staff who witnessed and dealt with it, they will also sign it. When the parent arrives to pick their child up they will be told of the accident/incident and will be asked to sign the form. This is stored with their child's parental consent form.

In the case of a more serious injury i.e.(knock to head) one member of staff will stay with the child while a second member of staff will contact the parent/ emergency contact number. The member of staff will stay with the child until they are collected.

Again the first aid book will be filled in and signed by the staff member and the parents.

In the event of a serious accident/incident. Two members of staff will take control of all the other playgroup children, and if necessary will remove them away from the incident, keeping calm and giving reassurance. One member of staff will stay with the child whilst the other contacts the ambulance and parents. If the ambulance arrives before the parent, a member of staff will accompany the child to hospital (taking with them the child's record card, parents' consent letter, details of the incident and a mobile phone.) They will stay with the child until the parents arrive. Details, time, child's name, all to be written in the first aid book and signed by a member of staff and parent as soon as possible after the incident.

MEDICINE BOOK

A separate book from the first aid one is used when a child needs to be given medication prescribed by the doctor, as long as the child has been taking it for 24hrs (in case of allergic reaction). The parents should detail the administration of medication also give their permission for staff to administer it, if necessary during a session. Staff will sign the book every time medication is given. The parent should counter sign it at the end of each session.

INCIDENT BOOK

An incident book is kept in the same way as the accident book. If a member of staff witnesses an incident between two or more children that was obviously not an accident, and it is deemed inappropriate behaviour for playgroup. This will be noted in the book by the member of staff and signed by them, then shown to the parents/carers at the end of the session, when they will get a full account of the incident and asked to sign the book.

CURRICULUM

We want playgroup to be an enjoyable experience for your child, and we support them in developing their potential at their own pace. We provide an environment that will encourage the child to learn through play.

Prime areas

Personal , Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

In some cases this may be a child's first experience of independence from their immediate carer, we aim to help them respect and respond to other adults and children outside the home environment.

They are encouraged to concentrate independently and also take part in a group, developing social skills in sharing and co-operating with other children. Through activities and conversation they can learn to express their own feelings and control them, and have respect for the feelings of others.

Physical Development(PD)

A range of equipment allows the children to develop confidence and enjoyment in their use. They learn to climb and balance acquiring the skills and co-ordination they need for healthy exercise of their own bodies. Children are also encouraged in the use of tools, including pens and pencils, and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision.

Communication and Language (CL)

As a group the children are encouraged to talk about their experiences and listen to others, which helps extend their vocabulary and fluency. Adult led activities, such as music, stories and singing, aid to develop their concentration span.

Specific Areas

Literacy (L)

A well stocked book corner allows children to become familiar with books as a source of reference as well as stories and pictures, and learn to handle them with respect.

Children are helped to develop pre-reading and writing skills through games, puzzles and books. We have dual language books available and the library supplies a range of books that are changed every 6 weeks.

We have a large selection of writing and mark making tools.

Mathematics

Children become familiar with sorting, matching and counting activities through songs, books and games and learn to identify shapes. They begin to understand simple ideas of length/volume/weight.

Understanding the World(UW)

There is a wide range of ethnic toys, puzzles, books, dressing up clothes and cooking utensils for the children to enjoy. We celebrate several different festivals, for which we encourage the parents to help us. In group discussions we talk about our location and where the children have been for the weekend or on holiday. Staff encourage children

to talk about their environment.

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas. Art equipment including paint, glue, crayons, pencils, scissors and stencils are used as well as modelling with playdough, card and even household junk (egg or cereal boxes, cardboard tubes and plastic bottles etc.) We also have sand and water trays which we use indoors and out, this is a very popular activity.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

Staff and helpers will try to provide a positive role model for the children, with regard to friendliness and care.

Physical punishment, or the threat of it, will not be used under any circumstances. Children will never be sent out of the classroom on their own. When unacceptable behaviour occurs, the child or children causing the problem will be told why their actions or words are wrong. It will always be made clear to them, it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome. If a problem is recurring, it will be discussed by all staff in partnership with the child's parents, using objective observations to establish an understanding of the cause.

STAFFING

We have at least one member of staff to each six children. All staff are encouraged to have an input into the planning of the sessions.

Training is on-going for all members of staff, updating qualifications as needed. All staff are CRB or DBS checked. We recruit staff in accordance with all relevant legislation.

We have a student placement agreement with the local schools and Crawley College. Students are not admitted in numbers that would hinder the playgroup. Students must be confirmed by their tutor as being engaged in a bona fide Childcare course, which provides necessary background and understanding of children's development and activities.

Parents should be aware that they have the right to access their child's records at any time, but they are also shown to the parents every term so that they can follow their child's progress. If there is any cause for complaint, please speak to the playgroup Supervisor or the Chairperson if necessary, will refer the issue to the full committee.

Finally, all the staff and Committee hope that your child's time at playgroup will be as

happy and fulfilling as it is meant to be, and will set them on the right road for the rest of their lives.

STAFF

NAMES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Manager

Maryen Peiris
NCFE Cache level 4
NVQ 3 in childcare
Paediatric First Aid
Child protection Certificate
Manuel handling
Level 2 Food Hygiene
Montessori Diploma
Fire Safety Awareness
Fire Extinguisher Awareness
Singhalese speaker

Supervisor

Sarah-Mina Wise
City & Guilds level 3 in Childcare
Child Protection Certificate
Paediatric First Aid
Fire Safety Awareness
Fire Extinguisher Awareness

Assistants

Zella Saxby
PPA Foundation Diploma
Child Protection Certificate
Manuel handling
Paediatric First Aid
Level 2 Food Hygiene
Fire Safety Awareness
Fire Extinguisher Awareness

Kelly Williams
Cache Level 3
Child Protection Certificate
Paediatric First Aid
Fire Safety Awareness
Fire Extinguisher Awareness

Komal Parekh
City and Guilds Level 3 in Childcare
Early Learning and Childcare Pathway
Child Protection Certificate
Paediatric First Aid
Online food hygiene
Fire Safety Awareness
Fire Extinguisher Awareness
Gujarati and Hindi Speaker

Shannon Clemmans
BTEC level 3 cert. in Children's Care,
Learning and Development with Distinction
Paediatric First Aid
Fire Safety Awareness
Fire Extinguisher Awareness

Administrator

Maggy Stokes
Certificate in Pre-school Practice
Child Protection Certificate
Paediatric First Aid
Level 2 Food Hygiene
Cyber Security Awareness
Safe Guarding Children
Fire Safety Awareness
Fire Extinguisher Awareness

