

Chislet and District Pre-School Playgroup

Prospectus



Registered Charity No. 1059734
Member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance

Chislet and District Pre-School aims to:

- *provide high quality care and education for children primarily below statutory school age;*
- *work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop;*
- *add to the life and well-being of its local community; and*
- *offer children and their parents a service which promotes equality and values diversity.*

As a member of Chislet and District Pre-school, your child:

- *is in a safe and stimulating environment;*
- *is given generous care and attention, because of our high ratio of adults to children;*
- *has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;*
- *is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do;*
- *has staff who makes sure your child makes satisfying progress;*
- *is in a pre-school which sees you as a partner in helping your child to learn and develop; and*
- *is in a pre-school in which parents help to shape the service it offers.*

The service offered by Chislet and District Pre-school:

- *The pre-school is open term time during the year.*
- *We are closed for all school holidays.*
- *We are open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 9.15am – 11.45am. (From September 2006 our hours will be 9.15am –12.15am.)*
- *We provide care and education for young children between the ages of 2 and 5yrs.*

The curriculum provided by Chislet and District Pre-School

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our Pre-school helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are right for their age and stage of development.

For children 2 to 3 years of age, we follow “Birth to Three Matters” which is the national curriculum for under 3’s.

For children between the ages of 3 and 5 years, the pre-school provides a curriculum for the foundation stage of education. This curriculum is set out in a document, published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Department for Education and Skills, and called Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Pre-school follows this guidance.

The guidance divides children's learning and development into six areas:

- *personal, social and emotional development;*
- *communication, language and literacy development;*

- *mathematical development;*
- *knowledge and understanding of the world;*
- *physical development; and*
- *creative development.*

For each area, the guidance sets out early learning goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know and be able to do by the end of the reception year of their education.

For each early learning goal, the guidance sets out stepping stones, which describe the stages through which children are likely to pass as they move to achievement of the goal. Chislet and District Pre-school uses the early learning goals and their stepping stones to help us to trace each child's progress and to enable us to provide the right activities to help all of the children move towards achievement of the early learning goals.

Personal, social and emotional development

This area of children's development covers:

- *having a positive approach to learning and finding out about the world around them;*
- *having confidence in themselves and their ability to do things, and valuing their own achievements;*
- *being able to get on, work and make friendships with other people, both children and adults;*
- *becoming aware of - and being able to keep to - the rules which we all need to help us to look after ourselves, other people and our environment;*
- *being able to dress and undress themselves, and look after their personal hygiene needs; and*
- *being able to expect to have their ways of doing things respected and to respect other people's ways of doing things.*

Communication language and literacy

This area of children's development covers:

- *being able to use conversation with one other person, in small groups and in large groups to talk with and listen to others;*
- *adding to their vocabulary by learning the meaning of - and being able to use - new words;*
- *being able to use words to describe their experiences;*
- *getting to know the sounds and letters which make up the words we use;*
- *listening to - and talking about - stories;*
- *knowing how to handle books and that they can be a source of stories and information;*
- *knowing the purposes for which we use writing; and*
- *making their own attempts at writing.*

Mathematical development

This area of children's development covers:

- *building up ideas about how many, how much, how far and how big;*
- *building up ideas about patterns, the shape of objects and parts of objects, and the amount of space taken up by objects;*
- *starting to understand that numbers help us to answer questions about how many, how much, how far and how big;*
- *building up ideas about how to use counting to find out how many; and*
- *being introduced to finding the result of adding more or taking away from the amount we already have.*

Knowledge and understanding of the world

This area of children's development covers:

- *finding out about the natural world and how it works;*
- *finding out about the made world and how it works;*
- *learning how to choose - and use - the right tool for a task;*
- *learning about computers, how to use them and what they can help us to do;*
- *starting to put together ideas about past and present and the links between them;*
- *beginning to learn about their locality and its special features; and*
- *learning about their own and other cultures.*

Physical development

This area of children's development covers:

- *gaining control over the large movements which we can make with our arms, legs and bodies, so that they can run, jump, hop, skip, roll, climb, balance and lift;*
- *gaining control over the small movements we can make with our arms, wrists and hands, so that they can pick up and use objects, tools and materials; and*
- *learning about the importance of - and how to look after - their bodies.*

Creative development

This area of children's development covers:

- *using paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play to express their ideas and feelings; and*
- *becoming interested in the way that paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play can be used to express ideas and feelings.*

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children think. Chislet and District Pre-school uses the early learning goals and their stepping stones to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide

how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the early learning goals and stepping stones has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Working together for your children

Pre-school has a high ratio of adults to children in the setting. This helps us to:

- *give time and attention to each child;*
- *talk with the children about their interests and activities;*
- *help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide; and*
- *allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety.*

The staff who work at Chislet and District Pre-school are:

Kay Fulker – Supervisor
Carol Lancaster – Deputy Supervisor
Debbie Hoare – Assistant
Natasha Partridge – Assistant
Mandy Fulcher - Assistant

How parents take part in the pre-school

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, Chislet and District Pre-school recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as co-workers with you in providing care and education for your child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the pre-school a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- *exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff;*
- *helping at sessions of the pre-school;*
- *sharing their own special interests with the children;*
- *helping to provide, make and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;*
- *being part of the management of the pre-school;*
- *taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the pre-school;*
- *joining in community activities in which the pre-school takes part; and*
- *building friendships with other parents in the pre-school.*

The parents' rota

The pre-school has a dated rota which you can sign if you would like to help at a particular session or sessions of the pre-school. Helping at the session enables you to see what the day-to-day life of the pre-school is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities.

Joining in

Joining the rota is not the only means of taking part in the life of the pre-school. You can offer to take part in a session by sharing your own interests and skills with the children. Parents have visited the pre-school to: play the piano for the children; show young chicks and show the children their photographs of outings.

Do feel free to arrange to drop into the pre-school, if you would like to see it at work or to speak with the staff.

Records of achievement

The pre-school keeps a record of achievement for each child. Staff and parents working together on their children's records of achievement is one of the ways in which Pre-school and parents work in partnership. Your child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Staff will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and she will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable staff to identify your child's stage of progress, and how to move forward.

Learning opportunities for adults

As well as gaining qualifications in early years care and education, the pre-school staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with thinking about early years care and education.

The pre-school also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice in early years care and education through the Pre-school Learning Alliance's magazine Under Five and publications produced by the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The current copy of Under Five is available for you to read.

From time to time the pre-school holds learning events for parents. These usually look at how adults can help children to learn and develop in their early years. Courses on similar topics are held locally by the Pre-school Learning Alliance: watch out for information about these.

The pre-school's timetable and routines

Chislet and District Pre-school believes that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the pre-school's session are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the pre-school;
- ensure the safety of each child;

- help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group; and
- provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

The Session

The pre-school organises its sessions so that the children can choose from - and work at - a range of activities and, in doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small and large group activities which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others.

Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them. The children have the opportunity - and are encouraged - to take part in outdoor child-chosen and adult-led activities, as well as those provided in the indoor playroom.

Snacks

The pre-school make snacks a social time at which children and adults eat together. We provide fruit and a biscuit at snack-time and a choice of milk or water to drink. We use snack-time to celebrate birthdays and special occasions during the year. Do tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met.

Policies

Copies of the pre-school's policies are available to read. Please see Kay Fulker. These include policies on Admissions, Special Needs, Settling in, Child Protection, Equality and diversity, Health and safety, Complaints procedures, Behaviour management, Confidentiality, Food and drink, Staffing and employment and non-collection of children.

The pre-school's policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the pre-school is a high quality one and that being a member of the pre-school is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents.

The staff and parents of the pre-school work together to adopt the policies and they all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the pre-school to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

Special needs

As part of the pre-school's policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs which a child may have. The pre-school works to the requirements of the 1993 Education Act and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2000). The pre-school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Kay Fulker.

The Management of Pre-school

A parent management committee - whose members are elected by the parents of the children who attend the pre-school - manages the pre-school. The elections take place at the pre-school's Annual General Meeting which is held in June each year.

The committee is responsible for:

- *managing the pre-school's finances;*
- *employing and managing the staff;*
- *making sure that the pre-school has - and works to - policies which help it to provide a high quality service; and*
- *making sure that the pre-school works in partnership with the children's parents.*

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all of the children who attend the pre-school. It is their forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's activities.

Fees

The fees are £6.00 per session, payable half-termly in advance or weekly by arrangement with the Treasurer. Fees must still be paid if children are absent for a short period of time. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, talk to the committee chair or the supervisor. For your child to keep her/his place at the pre-school, you must pay the fees or we must receive nursery education funding for your child. At present all children will receive funding for five sessions per week starting for the term after their third birthday. See the supervisor for more details.

Starting at Chislet and District Pre-school

The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe at the pre-school. To make sure that this is the case, the staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the pre-school. The pre-school has a policy about helping children to settle into the pre-school: a copy is enclosed in this prospectus.

Clothing

The pre-school provides protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities, but please don't send them in best clothes as we don't want them worrying about spoiling anything.

The pre-school encourages children to gain the skills which help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off - and putting on - outdoor clothes. Clothing which is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

Chislet and District Pre-school hopes that you and your child enjoy being members of the pre-school and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. The staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.

Settling in Pre-School Policy

Statement of Intent

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the pre-school and to feel secure and comfortable with staff we also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the pre-school.

Aim

We aim to make the pre-school a welcome place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Methods

- Before a child starts to attend the pre-school, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies), displays about pre-school activities, and individual meetings with parents.
- During the half-term before a child is enrolled, we provide opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the pre-school.
- When a child starts to attend, we work with his/her parents to decide on the best way to help the child settle into the pre-school.
- We use pre-start visits and the first session at which a child attends, to explain and complete with his/her parents, the child's registration records.
- Within the first four weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to create their child's record of achievement, which will start with examples of their work and any points parents wish to note.