

ST MARY'S PLAYGROUP



2022 - 2023 PROSPECTUS

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St Mary's Playgroup
Orchard Place Faversham Kent ME13 8AP

Introduction

St Mary's Playgroup opened in 1985. It is situated in the grounds of St Mary of Charity Primary School in the centre of Faversham. The playgroup is open each weekday, during term time only. From January 2017 the playgroup is opening from 09:00 to 15:30 every day.

Our session times are

Morning - 09:00 to 12:00

Afternoon - 12:30 to 15:30

Full Day – 09:00 to 15:30

To join the morning and afternoon sessions we offer a lunch club at a cost of £3.00 per day per child, children are required to bring in a packed lunch.

Our Wednesday afternoon session is reserved for children 3+years, this is to allow us to have out different resources and play games that may not be suited to our younger children, it is also an opportunity to build and consolidate learning on the foundation skills needed for future learning.

Our setting aims to:

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

Parents

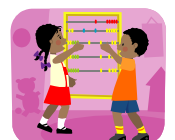
Parents are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be:

- valued and respected;
- kept informed;
- consulted;
- involved; and
- included at all levels.

As a community based, parent committee managed setting, we also depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep going. Membership of the setting carries expectations on parents for their support and commitment.

We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a **safe and stimulating** environment;
- is given **generous care and attention**, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as volunteer parent helpers;
- 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 a **personal key person** who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress;
- is in a setting that sees **parents as partners** in helping each child to learn and develop; and
- is in a setting in which **parents help to shape the service** it offers.



Children's development and learning

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by The Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2014). From September 2008, the Early Years Foundation Stage became law. A new statutory framework for the early year's foundation stage was introduced in September 2021 which states the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five and we work in accordance with this. There are four overarching principles

How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Areas of learning are divided into 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas as follows

Areas of learning and development

Aspect

Prime Areas

Communication and language

Listening, Attention and Understanding
Speaking

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation
Managing Self
Building Relationships

Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills
Fine Motor Skills

Specific Areas

Literacy

Word Reading
Writing

Mathematics

Number
Numerical Patterns

Understanding the world

Past and Present
People Cultures and Communities
The Natural World

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials
Being Imaginative and Expressive



St Mary's Playgroup using the Milestone Assessment Toolkit to assess children's development to ensure:

- early identification of developmental delays so support can be put in place at the earliest opportunity,
- children are on track to reach the expected developmental milestones,
- identify gaps in learning and inform planning

Personal, social and emotional development

Our programme supports children to develop:

- positive approaches to learning and finding out about the world around them;
- confidence in themselves and their ability to do things, and valuing their own achievements;
- their ability to get on, work and make friendships with other people, both children and adults;
- their awareness 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;
- their ability to dress and undress themselves, and look after their personal hygiene needs; and
- their ability to expect to have their ways of doing things respected and to respect other people's ways of doing things.



Physical

Our programme supports children to develop:

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

Communication and language

Our programme supports children to develop:

- conversational skills with one other person, in small groups and in large groups to talk with and listen to others;
- their vocabulary by learning the meaning of - and being able to use - new words;
- their ability to use words to describe their experiences;
- their ability to listen to, and talk about, stories;



Literacy

Our programme supports children to develop:

- their knowledge of the sounds and letters that make up the words we use;
- knowledge of how to handle books and that they can be a source of stories and information;
- knowledge of the purposes for which we use writing; and
- making their own attempts at writing.



Mathematics

Our programme supports children to develop:

- understanding and ideas about how many, how much, how far and how big;
- understanding and ideas about patterns, the shape of objects and parts of objects, and the amount of space taken up by objects;

- understanding that numbers help us to answer questions about how many, how much, how far and how big;
- understanding and ideas about how to use counting to find out how many; and
- early ideas about the result of adding more or taking away from the amount we already have.

Understanding the world

Our programme supports children to develop:

- knowledge about the natural world and how it works;
- knowledge about the world and how it works;
- their learning about computers, how to use them and what they can help us to do;
- their skills on how to put together ideas about past and present and the links between them;
- their learning about their locality and its special features; and
- their learning about their own and other cultures.



Expressive arts and design

Our programme supports children to develop:

- the use of paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play to express their ideas and feelings; and
- their interest in the way that paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play can be used to express ideas and feelings.



Our approach to learning and development and assessment

Learning through play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Your child's key person will use children's interests, observations and assessments 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. Children's interests are the starting point in planning for children's learning and development.



Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework. These form part of children's learning journeys. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as times of transition, such as when a child moves into a different group or when they go on to school.



Learning Journey

The setting keeps a learning journey for each child. Staff and parents working together on their children's learning journey is one of the ways in which the key person and parents work in partnership. Your child's learning journey 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.



Key person and your child

Our setting uses a key person approach. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom she/he is particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that what we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, she/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, she/he will help your child to benefit from the setting's activities. Your child's key person will work with you to keep the record of achievement.

Working together for your children

Staff at St Mary's Playgroup work closely together 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

The staff who work at St Mary's Playgroup are:

Name	Job Title	Qualifications Level (held/working towards)
Jennifer Smith	Playgroup Manager	BA (Honors) Early Years Studies
Rachel Beake	Deputy Manager and SENCO	Level 3 in Early Years
Claire Liddle	Playgroup Practitioner	Level 3 in Early Years
Alisha May	Playgroup Practitioner	Level 3 in Early Years
Jolene Coppins	Playgroup Practitioner	Level 2 in Early Years (*)
Tia Martin	Playgroup Practitioner	Level 2 in Early Years (*)
Hannah Parker	Playgroup Practitioner	Working towards level 3 in Early years
Melissa Hosking	Playgroup Administrator	
Kylie Muddle	Practitioner – Cover Staff	Level 3 in Early Years
Harriet Harris	Practitioner - Cover Staff	Level 3 in Early Years

(*) Currently working towards a full and relevant Level 3 Qualification.

Parents

How parents take part in the playgroup

As a member of the Early Years Alliance (formerly Pre-school Learning Alliance), St Mary's Playgroup recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All 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 playgroup 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 playgroup;
- 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 playgroup;
- taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the playgroup;
- joining in community activities in which the playgroup takes part; and
- building friendships with other parents in the playgroup.

Staff Training

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

The playgroup also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice in early years' care and education through continual professional development. Safeguarding is paramount to St Mary's Playgroup so all staff complete safeguarding training in line with current local and national guidelines. All staff members are also required to complete 12 hour paediatric first aid training.

The playgroup's timetable and routines

St Mary's Playgroup believes that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the playgroup's session/day are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the playgroup;
- 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 playgroup 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 playgroup makes snacks a social time at which children eat together. We plan the menus for snacks so that they provide the children with healthy and nutritious food. Do tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met.

Policies

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

Policies are adopted by the committee and are always available for parents to read and comment on at playgroup. They are also available to view on our website.

Health and safety policy

Statement of intent

This playgroup believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our playgroup a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers.

Behaviour management policy

Statement of intent

Our playgroup believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Safeguarding children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'.

Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our settings and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

Statement of intent

Our playgroup will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. We work within all legal framework requirements.

Equality and diversity policy

Statement of intent

Our playgroup is committed to valuing diversity by providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families.

Complaints procedure

Statement of intent

Our playgroup believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our playgroup and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the playgroup. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns.

St. Mary's Playgroup Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

St. Mary's Playgroup believes that all children are entitled to a broad and balanced early years curriculum. We welcome all children regardless of their individual needs. In order to achieve this, we work closely with the children, parents or carers and other outside agencies when required, while having regard for the DfES Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014). The playgroup's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Miss Rachel Beake.

All policies are available for you to look at any time.

Information we hold about you and your child

We have procedures in place for the recording and sharing of information data about you and your child that is compliant with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) as follows:

The data is we collect is

1. Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to you and your family]
2. Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes.
3. Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed.
4. Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Kept in a form that permits identification of you and your family for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed.
6. Processed in a way that ensures appropriate security of the personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

When you register your child with us we will provide you with a privacy notice that gives you further details of how we fulfil our obligations with regard to your data.

Visitors

Throughout the academic year, the playgroup will have visits from several outside agencies, including the Early Years Specialist Teachers, The Education People – sustainability officer, local teachers and a local Librarian, Police and Fire Service.

The management of St Mary's Playgroup

A parent **management committee** - whose members are elected by the parents of the children who attend the playgroup - manages the playgroup. The elections take place at the playgroup's Annual General Meeting which is held in October each year. The committee is responsible for:

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

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

Session times and Fees

Our sessions are;

0900 – 1200 for a morning session

1230 – 1530 for an afternoon session

0900 - 1530 for a full day session

The playgroup fees are £15.00 per session, payable daily, weekly or termly in advance. Fees must still be paid if children are absent. Fees are due from the date your child is registered to start playgroup. Once your child is registered with us and begun to attend, we will require 4 weeks cancellation notice to withdraw your child from playgroup.

If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, please talk to playgroup manager or the committee chair.

There is a lunch club to link morning and afternoon sessions at a cost of £3.00 per day and available each day, children are required to bring a packed lunch. Child can also attend lunch club to extend the morning or afternoon session, depending on availability.

For your child to keep her/his place at the playgroup, you must pay the fees or we must receive nursery education funding for your child.

Children will usually be funded for a maximum of 15 hours of nursery education from the term after their third birthday and this is available in 3 hour sessions.

There are also free places available for some 2 year olds if you meet the funding criteria.

Some 3 and 4 year olds may be entitled to 30 hours of free early education, if your family meets the funding criteria. More information about this can be found at St Marys playgroup, local children's centre, online from the children and family's information service or childcare choices.

We ask that you pick up on time and if you are late you will be added to the late book and a late fee may be charged.

There is a late fee of £10 per ten minutes which will be applied for late collection of children, whether or not they receive government funding.

Starting at St Mary's Playgroup



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 playgroup. The playgroup has a policy about helping children to settle into the group: A copy is available.

Clothing

The playgroup provides protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities.

The playgroup 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. **All outdoor clothing should be clearly named.**

We aim to include outdoor play every day, so please ensure children wear appropriate footwear, and clothing suitable for the weather. We ask that you provide a pair of wellington boots for your child to keep in the playgroup for outdoor play.

Lunch

Please help us to help your child make healthy choices by providing a healthy packed lunch for your child. Please limit sweet treats such as chocolate mousse/chocolate biscuit bars/biscuits/cake to ONE item and no sweets or chocolate sweet bars. Please do not include nuts or nut products such as peanut butter.

St Mary's Playgroup hopes that you and your child enjoy being members of the playgroup 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.