

Hurstpierpoint



Pre-School

## Welcome Information Booklet

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**Ofsted Registration:** 113538  
**Registered Charity:** 1023326  
**A member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance**

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# Welcome to Hurstpierpoint Pre-School

Thank you for choosing to send your child to Hurstpierpoint Pre-School. Choosing a Pre-School for your child is a huge responsibility. We aim to provide high quality, affordable childcare and education for the local community. We are registered with Ofsted and are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

Hurstpierpoint Pre-School is situated in the Village Centre in Hurstpierpoint. We are a registered charity and a committee run Pre-School and all parents of children attending are eligible to join the committee. The Parent Management Committee manages the Pre-School and all its funds which gives all parents the opportunity to become involved in the running of the Pre-School.

This Welcome Booklet is designed to give you information about the Pre-School and should answer many of your questions. This should be read in conjunction with our policies which give more detailed information about our practices and procedures. These are available in the Pre-School foyer.

## The Staff Team

Sessions at the Pre-School are staffed by an experienced team of childcare workers who all bring their own special skills to the Pre-School. Our current staff team is:

Carey Tighe	Manager/Early Years Teacher	Marcia Myles	Assistant
Lesley Marsh	Deputy Manager	Nicola Pullen	Assistant
Helen Brangwyn	Forest School Leader	Vicki Russell	Assistant
Claire Majasai	Teacher	Emma Smith	Assistant
Joy Ewins	Assistant	Alex Ferrari	Administrator

Our SEND and Inclusion Co-ordinator is Lesley Marsh.

Our Health and Safety Officer is Vicki Russell.

Our Safeguarding Officers are Lesley Marsh, Carey Tighe and Claire Majasai.

## The Committee

Our current Parent Committee is listed on the foyer noticeboard. As trustees of our charitable organisation, Committee members play an important role in supporting the long-term sustainability of the Pre-School. We are always keen for new parents to get involved as Committee members; please look out for our AGM (in the Autumn term each year) or speak to staff about how you can help.

## Our Aims

- Celebrate the uniqueness of every child, supporting their individual interests and learning styles in order to progress their learning and development.
- Offer an exciting range of stimulating activities and experiences encouraging creativity and independence.
- Support children's learning by developing positive and caring relationships with children and their families.
- Encourage involvement of families in all aspects of Pre-School and to help ease the transition from home and family and provide an environment that celebrates individuality and diversity.

## Learning Through Play

At Hurstpierpoint Pre-School the staff work to create rich learning opportunities using play and playful teaching. We offer a range of opportunities for children to develop through exploration and discovery. As children learn and develop in different ways, our team takes great care to ensure the activities and resources at Preschool are varied and stimulating. The positive relationships that staff develop with the children encourages them to grow into strong, independent individuals.

Our sessions are a mixture of free play, where children can choose activities and are given time to work through a task to its completion, and adult led small and large group activities such as story time, snack time or circle time.

Outdoor play is essential for children's learning and development, as well as their enjoyment and wellbeing. Our children have access to 2 outside areas:

- The grassy garden, which overlooks the school field. A much-loved play area during the drier months, with a giant sandpit, climbing frame with wobbly bridge and tunnels for dens and hiding places.
- Our paved garden, which the children have free access to during most of the day. This has space for running, playing ball, riding bikes and scooters. This area is used every day throughout the year. It offers similar learning opportunities to the indoor environment with a focus on physical development, the natural world, exploration, imagination and working together.

## Forest School

We are very pleased to be able to offer our children Forest School sessions during their final year with us. For this we walk to St Georges Millennium Gardens at the eastern end of the village.

Forest School is an inspirational process that offers the children regular opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and build self-esteem through hands on learning in the natural environment. Many of the aims of Forest School link closely with our own early years curriculum such as physical and creative play, but also in more unexpected areas such as emotional and social development. Staff value the holistic approach of Forest School, which allows them to focus on the 'whole child' and helps develop their independence in readiness for starting school.

An additional benefit is that our Forest School sessions help children to make strong and lasting links with the Millennium Gardens and Parkland, which are such valuable natural spaces within the village.

### **Walkabouts**

As well as Forest School we also conduct regular walkabouts. Sometimes these will follow a planned theme, such as a number hunt along the village High Street, a visit to the fire station, or to see the new lambs at Tott Farm. Other days they may simply be a nature ramble along local footpaths looking for signs of the season.

Both Forest School and the walkabouts add an extra exciting element to Pre-School for our children. They both provide additional opportunities to learn through exploration and play within our local village and its natural environment.

## **Helping Your Child to Grow and Develop**

When your child starts at Pre-School they will be allocated a Key Person. Their role is to support your child and your family to get the most from their Pre-School experience. Usually your child keeps the same Key Person throughout their time at Pre-School

Initially your child's Key Person will help them settle into Pre-School and make friends. They will work with you and your child to overcome any initial difficulties or worries you might have.

During your child's time at Pre-School your Key Person will work with you to monitor your child's learning and development. We do this in an informal way, observing your child at play and using our observations to decide what activities and opportunities will help your child flourish and develop their skills. To record this development, we use the West Sussex County Council Learning Journal. This journal contains observations, photographs, next steps and an individual progress review to highlight how your child is developing within expected development goals. You will have regular opportunities to share this journal with your Key Person and contribute to it, often at our Parents Evenings.

## **Your Child's Development**

We complete the statutory 2-year development check with your child before their 3rd birthday and decide together how to best support your child.

We recognise that children don't always develop as expected and sometimes may need some extra help due to development delays, health issues or disability. We have lots of experience in this area and continually review and develop our services and skills so that we can welcome all children to our Pre-School.

Lesley Marsh is our Inclusion and Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator. Her role is to ensure all children are welcome and benefit from attending Pre-School. She attends regular SEND training and networks to ensure she has up to date information and contacts for a wide range of professionals who can support us and your family to provide the best for children who need a little extra help. Our Local Offer details how we support specific needs of young children and their families, copies are available from Pre-School and on our website.

## **Your Child's Behaviour**

Sometimes parents worry about their child's behaviour at Pre-School or at home. We have lots of strategies and ideas to help you cope with the ups and downs of parenting. Our staff have lots of experience of dealing with challenging behaviour and we hope that you will feel you can come and talk to us about any difficulties you are experiencing, it is part of our role to support you and your family either through our own experience and knowledge or by helping you find the right professional to help you.

## **Policies and Practices**

Our policies and practices follow current government policy and the revised Early Years Foundation Stage. All of our policies are aimed at providing a safe and stimulating environment for all children. Policies are available for parents/carers to read, these are located in a folder in the foyer. Copies can also be requested, please ask staff who will be happy to assist.

# Practical Information

## Our Opening Times

Morning sessions	9.00am – 12.00pm	Monday to Friday
Afternoon sessions	12.30 – 3.30pm	Monday to Thursday
Lunch club (for children attending a full day)	12 – 12.30pm	Monday to Thursday

The Pre-School is open 38 weeks each year, term time only. We are closed during school holidays.

We provide care and education for young children between the ages of 2½ and 5.

## Settling In

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.

Most children settle happily into Pre-School within a week or two. However, if the staff or you feel that your child needs you with them for a little longer please do not worry about this, it is quite normal. Parents are welcome to stay during the session for this settling in period. Your child will feel confident if you do. Please talk to the staff if you have any concerns.

## What your child should bring

Please send the following items with your child each session that they attend:

- Their red craft bag
- A complete change of clothes (please name all items)
- Suitable outdoor clothing (sunhats / coats, hats, wellies)
- Their special comforter/blanket/cuddly toy (to help them settle)
- A piece of fruit, vegetable, rice cakes or bread sticks for snack time (see below for more information). If your child is staying all day they will need a snack for two sessions, morning and afternoon.
- Nappy changing items if required.

## What to wear

We provide aprons for the children when they play with messy activities, however please send your child in clothes which you do not mind getting messy. We would like to encourage the children to wear their Pre-School t-shirt to each session. Although this is not compulsory, it will help your child to feel part of the Pre-School. You will receive one t-shirt when your child starts. Extra T-shirts and sweatshirts can be purchased if required directly from the Pre-School.

Staff encourage the children to gain the skills which help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and washing hands. Clothing which is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

Children should come to Pre-School in shoes suitable for being active. Please do not send children in crocs or open-toe sandals as we find these cause children to trip and fall when running.

All clothing and shoes must be labelled with your child's name.

## Jewellery and Valuables

For safety reasons, children are not permitted to wear jewellery in Pre-School, with the exception of stud earrings. Cultural/religious requirements will be respected, but please discuss these with the Manager. In this case the parent/carer takes full responsibility for loss or injury caused to or by the jewellery.

## Dropping Off and Collecting Your Child

The foyer door will be opened shortly before a session begins. Please supervise your child, encouraging them to place their coat on the rail in the foyer, place snacks in the basket provided and find their self-registration name card. When the Pre-School is ready, the main door will be opened and your child can enter.

At the end of each session we will open the door for you to wait in the foyer. The children will be released to you. Please remember to collect your child's belongings.

We will not allow your child to leave with somebody other than you, unless authorised to do so. It is important that you let us know if you make other arrangements.

## Snack Time

We like to make snacks a social time at which children eat together. Milk is provided free of charge and fresh drinking water is always available. We ask you to provide a piece of fruit, vegetable, rice cake, dried fruit or breadstick for each session your child attends. This is then prepared by staff and served so that your child can help

themselves to the food. Please tell us if your child has dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met.

## Lunch Club

Lunch club is available to children aged 3 and over staying all day. If your child is due to attend lunch club you will receive a separate letter giving more information. Please note that nuts are forbidden for lunch boxes or snacks.

## Care of your child

### Toileting

Children are encouraged to become independent and manage toileting themselves. If needed children are always assisted by staff who have been checked by the appropriate authority (currently the DBS). We will, as far as possible, follow the same routines as children follow at home with regard to toilet and potty training. We encourage good hygiene practices such as hand washing to prevent the spread of infection.

If your child has an 'accident', we will treat them with sympathy and understanding. Please note that we do not require your child to be toilet trained to attend the Pre-School. We are happy to change nappies and will assist you with your potty-training routine if required. If you have any concerns, please speak to your child's key worker.

### Accidents and Injuries

We record all accidents and injuries in the Accident Report Book and you will be asked to sign to acknowledge that we have informed you of the incident.

### Late Collection of Children

Please make every effort to be on time to collect your child. If you think you may be delayed, please inform staff and your child in advance. If a child is persistently collected late you may be charged.

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult within 30 minutes of the session ending, and after all reasonable attempts have been made to contact you or those authorised by you to collect your child, we will contact our local safeguarding board, West Sussex LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board). Please see our Policy File for full details.

## Missing Children

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. In the unlikely event of a child going missing either on the premises or whilst on an outing, our missing child procedures will be followed. Please see our Policy File for full details.

## Outings and Special Visitors

We endeavour to provide varied learning experiences for your child. With your permission (given when your child joins Pre-School) we will take the children into the local community for walkabouts, forest school sessions and small trips to the park, library, local school or shops. Larger outings at the end of the Summer Term and special visits / visitors require your specific written permission.

## Other Information

### Fees

As a registered charity we have no income apart from fees, so it is vital that all fees are paid in full. From September 2016, our fees are charged at a rate of £4.50 per hour. You will receive an invoice at the beginning of each term, which should be paid promptly. Other payment methods are available on request.

Fees must still be paid if children are absent with or without notice for any reason, including holidays or sickness. For your child to keep their place at the Pre-School, you must pay your child's fees.

If you have any difficulties with payment, please let us know and we will do our best to help. As a registered charity, we are obliged to collect all monies owing. We endeavour to collect all debts without involving the authorities.

### Free Entitlement

From the term following their 3rd birthday, your child will be eligible for 15 hours of free childcare, for 38 weeks of the year. To claim this Free Entitlement you must complete a Parent Declaration Form (supplied by us) and provide us with proof of your child's date of birth (for example their birth certificate or passport). You must also notify us if your child attends another childcare setting, as you are entitled to split your funding between multiple providers.

Two-year-old and 30 hours funding is available to eligible families. Please visit the West Sussex County Council website or the Children and Family Centre for current eligibility criteria.

## Illness

Illness is unavoidable in young children. Children who are unwell should not be brought to Pre-School. Please inform us of their absence by telephone or text.

If your child has been ill, they must not attend until 24 hours after their last symptoms. Please inform us if your child has been ill.

For cases of vomiting and diarrhoea, children must not attend until 48 hours after their last symptoms .

In certain circumstances, staff are allowed to administer essential medication if your child has a chronic condition.

If we have more than one case of an illness, such as Chicken Pox, we will put a notice up in the foyer.

## Communicating with Parents

Regular newsletters are produced and sent by email to let parents know of meetings, events, fundraising activities, committee activities and any other information that parents should be aware of.

## Joining In

Parent volunteers help us run activities such as walkabouts and forest school sessions, as well as fundraising events like cake sales and coffee mornings. Their support is invaluable in making these activities happen. If you are interested in becoming more involved please speak to a member of staff.

## Babysitting

We are aware that some staff at Pre-School engage in activities involving childcare outside of Pre-School hours, such as babysitting or childminding. Any babysitting or childminding undertaken by Pre-School staff outside of Pre-School hours is a private arrangement, and individual members of staff are not representing Pre-School during these times. Any discussions of private childcare should take place outside of Pre-School hours.