



Registered Charity # 1203754

My First Days at Pre-school

Settling-In and The Role of the Key Person

We want your child to feel happy, safe, and settled with us. To support this, our staff will work closely with you to create a personalised settling-in plan. Our approach is based on flexibility, adapting to each child's individual needs. We understand that settling into a new environment can take time, and we are here to support both you and your child every step of the way. Your child's key person will play a central role in this process, ensuring a smooth and nurturing transition. We have found that allowing children to settle at their own pace fosters a positive experience, helps them form a strong connection with pre-school, and minimises the risk of setbacks.

What to Bring

- Drink
- Snack
- Lunch
- Spare clothes
- Nappies and wipes (if applicable)
- Winter hat, scarves and gloves, wellie socks
- Wellies (to stay at pre-school)
- Book bag

What we Provide

- Sunhats
- Waterproof coat and waterproof trousers

Arrival and Drop-off

Please arrive at the side entrance gate and use the labelled trolleys to place your child's drink, snack, and lunch. There will also be a bag trolley where you can leave a bag containing spare clothes, nappies, wipes (if applicable), and items like hats, scarves, gloves and thick socks. Wellies, which we encourage to stay at the pre-school, are also helpful. Another trolley will be provided for coats, jackets, and bags that your child will take home, such as the provided book bag. This trolley will have your child's name and photo displayed next to a peg, though the photo may move.

A staff member will meet you at the gate for any important information exchange before you say goodbye to your child. We will bring your child to you at the end of the day and provide a brief handover about their day. If you'd like a longer conversation with a staff member, please arrive earlier, as drop-off and pick-up times can be very busy.

To share your child's first day with you, we'll post a photo on Family and, if your child was particularly unsettled at drop-off, we'll give you a call with an update. For the first six weeks, we focus on helping the children settle in, get to know each other, and familiarise themselves with the pre-school routine.



The Session

We believe both care and education are equally important in providing a fulfilling experience for children. The routines and activities of the day are designed to:

- Help each child feel like a valued member of the setting
- Ensure the safety of every child
- Offer children opportunities for social experiences in a group
- Provide opportunities for learning and encourage a love for learning

We organise our sessions so that children can choose from a variety of activities, allowing them to build their skills in selecting tasks and seeing them through to completion. Children are also encouraged to participate in adult-led small and large group activities, which introduce them to new experiences, skills, and teamwork. Outdoor activities are an integral part of the curriculum and contribute to all areas of development, including physical health and knowledge of the world. Children are given opportunities to engage in both child-initiated and adult-guided outdoor and indoor activities.

Our Timetable

Time	Activity
09:00	Welcome Children and Self Registration
09:30	Good Morning / Bucket Time
09:45 – 11:45	Free Play / Morning Walk or Field
10:00 – 11:00	Rolling Snack
11:45	Songs, Story and Morning Children's Sharing Time
12:00	Morning Children Go Home
12:00	All Day Children Free Play / Structured Activity (Choice Given)
12:50	Music and Movement
13:00	Lunchtime
13:30	Quiet Time (Story, CD, Yoga or Mindfulness)
14:00	Free Play (Usually Outside)
14:45	Songs, Story, and Children's Sharing Time
14:50 - 15:00	Children Go Home

Self-Registration

As the children arrive, they are encouraged to find their name discs and hang them on the "Who's Here" board. This activity helps develop their motor skills and eye-hand coordination in a fun and engaging way.

Good Morning

Children who wish to join gather on the carpet with a member of staff. Together, they read a short story and discuss the book before choosing a coloured pompom that reflects how they are feeling. The pompom is then placed in the corresponding-coloured jar. This is a valuable opportunity for children to explore, recognise, and label their emotions. During this time, we also remind the children of our golden rules:

1. Kind hands and feet
2. Kind words
3. We help each other
4. We look after pre-school toys
5. We put toys back where they belong



Bucket Time

While children are participating in the 'Good Morning' session on the carpet, a small group of 2-3 children are invited to engage in "Bucket Time". This activity offers a quiet, sensory-focused experience for those children who struggle to sit in larger groups. This gives them a calming start to the day, helping to focus their attention.

Free Play / Morning Walk

The children are divided into groups, with each child going for a walk at least once a week. Depending on the day's plans, the weather, and individual session timings, some children may have the chance to go for more than one walk. These walks provide opportunities for activities such as bird watching, flower spotting, discussing the changing seasons, feeding ducks, building dens, climbing, and playing games like stuck in the mud, hide and seek, or ball games. Our walk routes include:

1. Houghton Mill
2. The playing fields & park
3. The school field

Children who do not go for a walk enjoy activities in the construction and small world areas, the home corner, or the themed area (for example, a hospital this week). The book corner is always available, with a quiet space provided by the tepee.

Three activity tables are set up daily, offering a variety of activities such as playdough, painting, mark making, Lego, puzzles, and Knex. Staff members typically sit at one or two tables to engage with the children, chatting and joining in the play.

Garden Time

We encourage all children to access the garden daily. On days when the weather permits, the children enjoy a variety of outdoor activities, including climbing frames, obstacle courses, a swing, a sandpit, ride-along cars, small cars and garages, a trampoline, chalk drawing, dolls and prams, dress-up, and books. The garden is open for free-flow access throughout the day.

Allergy Awareness

Our staff are fully trained in paediatric first aid, including the use of auto-injector pens, in case of life-threatening allergies. We are a nut-free setting and kindly ask that the following items are not brought in due to severe allergies:

- Houmous containing sesame oil/seeds
- Sesame seeds on breadsticks, rolls, etc.
- Pesto containing pine nuts
- Any nut products

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Rolling Snack

The snack bar opens each morning at 10:00 and remains available until 11:00. Each day, a child is chosen to be the 'snack bar helper.' This child helps set up the snack table by clearing,



spraying, and cleaning it, as well as gathering the cups, milk, and water jugs from the kitchen. Once the table is ready, children wash their hands, remove their name disc from the board, find their snack and drink, and sit at the table to enjoy their food. A staff member always sits with the children during snack time, modelling good table manners, eating habits, and encouraging conversations.

Example of a Packed Snack

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
celery and carrot sticks	grapes chopped in half-length ways	1/2 a banana	blueberries	mini sandwich with avocado or cheese filling
cheese chunks	yoghurt tube	oatcake	breadsticks and soft cheese	satsuma
multi-grain cracker	rice cake	cucumber and cheese sticks	tomatoes	plain popcorn

Other Popular Snack Ideas:

✓ Melon

✓ Apple

✓ Dried Cereal

✓ Mini Cheddars



Songs, Story, and Morning Children’s Sharing Time

At 11:45, our morning children gather in the foyer where they sing 4 to 5 songs before sitting down for a story. Two books are selected and placed on the floor. A staff member reads the back cover of each book and hands out a wooden disc to each child. The children then vote for which story they would like to hear by placing their disc in the hoop next to their chosen book. This is also a special time for the children to share anything they would like, whether it’s a picture, a birthday celebration, or a “wow” moment, offering them the chance to share with their friends.

All Day Children – Free Play / Structured Activity (Choice Given)

For the children who stay for the full day, they continue to access both the room and the garden. They have the option to play board games in small groups of 4-6 children, with a staff member facilitating the activity. This allows them to enjoy structured play while still having the freedom to choose their activities.

Movement & Music



This 10-minute activity is enjoyed by both staff and children before lunch. It includes singing and dancing in the foyer, with various activities depending on the day. Sometimes we use the iPad to play interactive games like “The Floor is Lava,” or we play music from their favourite soundtracks (e.g., *Frozen*, *Encanto*, *Sing*). On other days, we sing and do the actions to familiar songs like “If You’re Happy and You Know It” or “Walking in the Jungle.” Afterward, we all sit on the floor to feel our heartbeats, providing a great opportunity for staff and children to discuss the importance of exercise and how it affects our bodies.

Lunch

At lunchtime, the children sit in small groups of 4-6, with a staff member at each table. This setup encourages children to model good table manners, observe how and what others eat, and understand the value of sharing a meal with friends, fostering social interaction and a sense of community.

Example of a Packed Lunch

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
chicken and mashed avocado tortilla wrap	tuna and sweetcorn pasta	grated cheese in a wholemeal roll, quartered	wholemeal Pitta bread with ham and lettuce	leftover spaghetti bolognese in a flask
sweetcorn	celery sticks	sliced tomatoes	carrot and bell pepper sticks	hard cheese cubed or grated
satsuma	strawberries and raspberries	cucumber sticks	rice pudding	plain yogurt
one slice malt loaf with spread	plain fromage frais	banana	melon	blueberries

Other Popular Lunch Ideas:

- ✓ soft cheese and cucumber sandwiches
- ✓ rice and peas
- ✓ soup and bread
- ✓ English muffin pizzas
- ✓ couscous



- ✓ canned fish sandwiches, such as tuna, pilchards or salmon
- ✓ toast slices
- ✓ cooked meats and vegetables
- ✓ Cooked potatoes





Quiet Time (Story, CD, Yoga, or Mindfulness)

After lunch, the children are encouraged to enjoy some quiet time. On some days, a staff member will read a story to the children, followed by watching or listening to a DVD/audio book, such as *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*. On other days, we engage in a calming yoga session or explore mindfulness activities, introducing the children to the concept of being present and mindful of their thoughts and feelings.

Important Information for Parents

Snack and Lunch Time

We consider snack and mealtimes an important part of the day, as they represent a social time for children and adults. These times also offer opportunities for children to learn about healthy eating habits. We encourage parents to provide nutritious food for all meals and snacks, ensuring that they meet the individual dietary needs of their child. We kindly ask that you avoid including large quantities of saturated fats, sugar, salt, artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings in your child's meals.

We have listed some examples of what makes a good snack or lunch at pre-school. As part of our commitment to healthy eating, we request that you refrain from packing crisps, chocolate, cakes, or sweets in their lunch boxes. Please save these types of treats for home. Additionally, we are a nut-free setting due to allergies, so we ask you to avoid using nut products and check for nuts in items such as cereal bars. Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated.

We understand that some children may have specific food preferences or aversions to certain textures, which can be stressful for both children and parents. Our staff will provide support to you and your child in such cases.

Due to limited fridge space, please pack an ice pack in your child's lunch box to keep perishable items cool. If something needs to be refrigerated, please inform a staff member.

We are unable to reheat food at the pre-school, so if your child requires hot food, we ask that you use a thermos container. At lunchtime, we will pour the contents into a bowl for your child to eat.

Based on our experience, we recommend not overfilling lunch boxes, as an excessive amount of food can overwhelm some children, making them anxious about not having enough time to eat. By the summer term, many children are able to eat larger portions in a shorter amount of time.

Clothing



We provide aprons for the children when engaging in messy activities. However, we encourage the children to wear aprons, but we do not force them. Please dress your child in clothes that are comfortable and can get messy. We encourage children to develop independence and learn how to care for themselves, including taking themselves to the toilet and putting on or taking off outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will support these skills.

Please ensure that all clothing and belongings your child brings to pre-school are clearly labelled, as this helps both your child and our staff.

Accidents and Incidents

As children develop physically, accidents can occasionally happen. In the event of an accident, most of our staff are trained in first aid. If your child has an accident at pre-school, you will be informed via Family or, in some cases, by telephone (for example, if you are not collecting your child that day). If your child suffers a significant bump to the head, you will be contacted immediately. Your child will be monitored, and in most cases, they will be able to continue their day as normal. If there is concern regarding an injury, you will be asked to collect your child, and a visit or phone call to your GP may be recommended. In the case of a more serious accident, we will contact you immediately and take necessary action, including potentially calling for paramedic support if needed.

Existing Injuries

If your child has an accident or injury outside of pre-school, please inform us at drop-off. You will be asked to complete an "Existing Injury" form. If we notice something later and have not been informed, a member of staff will contact you for clarification, and we will fill out the form accordingly for you to sign when you collect your child at the end of the day.

Illness

If a child becomes unwell while at pre-school, we will inform you immediately and agree on a course of action. We may take your child's temperature using an ear thermometer. We follow guidance from Public Health England, Local Government, and National Government regarding illnesses. Children cannot attend pre-school if they are infectious or have a raised temperature. If your child has had sickness or diarrhoea, they must stay home for 48 hours after the last bout of illness.

Medicines

We are happy to administer prescription medication, including long-term medications like inhalers or eczema creams, provided your child is well enough to attend and the staff are trained to do so. All medicines must be in the original container, clearly labelled with your child's name, dosage, and prescription date. We cannot administer medications that do not meet these criteria. If your child has never been given a prescribed medication before, they must remain at home for 48 hours to ensure there are no adverse reactions.

Please note that we are unable to administer Calpol (paracetamol) or Nurofen (ibuprofen). We kindly ask that you do not administer these medications before bringing your child to pre-school, as they can mask serious illnesses like meningitis.

Vaccinations

We recommend that children are fully vaccinated for their own protection and for the safety of others who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons. While vaccination is not a requirement



for admission, it is strongly encouraged. We also recommend that your child receives the flu vaccine when it is offered.

How Parents Take Part in the Setting

We believe that parents are the first and most important educators of their children. Our staff sees themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education. There are many ways parents can contribute to our setting, such as:

- Sharing knowledge about their child's needs, activities, interests, and progress with staff
- Contributing to the progress check at age two
- Sharing special interests with the children
- Assisting in the care of equipment and materials
- Participating in fundraising committees (when applicable)
- Attending events and informal discussions about our activities and curriculum
- Engaging in community activities with us
- Building friendships with other parents

Library Book Bag

We encourage a love of reading by giving children the opportunity to choose a book each week to take home in their book bag to read with their families. This helps build confidence and enjoyment around reading outside of the classroom. From time to time, we will send home artwork and other pieces of work in the book bags, so we kindly ask that you check them regularly.

Joint Parental Responsibility

In the event of a family dispute, childcare providers must follow clear legal procedures. Parents who are married or both listed on the birth certificate have equal parental responsibility unless otherwise stated by a court order or social services. To avoid exacerbating any disputes, we will remain neutral unless directed by a court order or social services. It is important that we are kept informed of any such situations so we can fully support families.

We hope you and your child enjoy being a part of our setting and find our activities stimulating and engaging. Our staff are always available to discuss any ideas, concerns, or questions you may have.



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OUR TEAM

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