



# **ST JAMES PRE-SCHOOL**

St. James' Church Centre, Kingfisher Drive, RG5 3LH

## **PROSPECTUS**

# **Welcome to St. James Pre-School**

## **Readiness for Pre-school**

Starting pre-school is an important step for both you and your child. We welcome children to the Pre-School from the age of 2 years. Some children are ready for pre-school at this age whilst others may need a little more emotional maturity. Our staff will be able to advise you if you are uncertain.

## **Session times**

Mornings: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday  
9.00 a.m. to 12 noon

Afternoons: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday  
12.45 p.m. to 3.45 p.m.

On a Wednesday, when there is no pre-school, you are welcome to bring your child to the St James' Church Toddler Group from 1.00pm – 2.30 pm.

We offer a lunch club facility on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 12.00 – 12.45. We also offer an early drop-off facility for each morning session from 8.45am.

## **Waiting List and Admissions**

A child's name may be registered on the waiting list at any age by calling into Pre-School or the Church Office and filling in a registration form. A registration fee of £10.00 is charged.

We usually recommend that children start with 2 sessions per week, but the Supervisor will discuss with the Parent/Carer what is most appropriate for individual children.

## **Ethos and Aims**

The children are at the heart of everything we do.

Our aim is to make our families feel welcome and confident with the care and support we provide for their child during a most important stage of their life. We value them as individuals. Where possible we provide for children with special needs.

Pre-school provides a safe place for children to learn through play as part of a group. It also provides the opportunity:

- To be the first step away from the home
- To enable children to learn the basic skills they need in preparation for the next stage of their education
- To encourage children to share
- To help children to make friends
- To develop different and imaginative ways of learning through play at their own pace

## **Learning through Play**

Play is a very important part of a child's development. We provide activities and learning opportunities which will enable a child to develop in the following areas:-

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development
- Outdoor learning

These areas make up the 'Early Years Foundation Stage'. Staff observe the progress of the children during their time at preschool and keep a record of their achievements. We encourage parents/guardians to contribute to their child's records and these records are available at any

time, for parents/guardians to see if they wish. When a child leaves pre-school, these records will be forwarded to their next setting.

The activities provided in a session are carefully chosen to give the children many and varied experiences and to be consistent with the overall curriculum plan. The activities will include:

Painting	Dough	Sand
Water	Dressing up	Books
Story time	Music	Puzzles
Games	Construction toys	Snack time

We also have large play equipment for in-door and outdoor use.

Children are taken on walks to the nearby lake, which helps their knowledge and understanding of the natural world.

Community links are fostered through visits from representatives from services such as the local Community Police and the Fire Service.

## **Staff**

Our staff are trained and experienced professionals with qualifications in Early Years Care and Education. This includes a thorough understanding of the Early Years' Foundation Stage.

Staff interests include nature and the environment; health and wellbeing; and expressive art and storytelling. They use their wide-ranging gifts and skills in a variety of ways to support and encourage the children in their individual development.

Our small nurturing environment with strong staff/child ratios ensures that no child is overlooked. Most sessions have no more than 16 children with 3 members of staff. We never have more than 20 children per session.

Most of our staff have children of their own so between them they have dealt with most eventualities and are always ready to lend a listening ear to any parent with concerns or questions.

## **Behaviour**

We aim to encourage an atmosphere where all children feel part of the group. We use positive methods to promote good behaviour and kindness. This includes praise, redirection and anticipating potential problems.

We aim to help the children to develop a sense of right or wrong by allowing them to share and talk about their feelings.

## **Settling In**

Before your child starts pre-school, the Admissions Co-ordinator will contact you to arrange for you and your child to visit a session. This will give you the opportunity to meet the staff and other children and to see what goes on.

Most children settle quickly into pre-school, but some may take a little longer and may need you to stay with them. The staff will be aware of each child's needs and will be very happy to talk to you about the best way to ensure that your child fully enjoys pre-school. We ask that parents pay for at least 6 sessions once they have decided to place their child with us. Early difficulties are usually overcome so please do not be too quick to withdraw a child.

## **What to bring**

Your child will need:

- Small towel
- Suitable outdoors clothes, including a coat
- Wellington boots on wet days
- Sun hat in the summer
- Spare nappies/pull-ups and wipes, if this is applicable.

Please name all items clearly and ensure that the towel has a small loop so that it can be hung on a peg.

In the summer please apply sun cream to your child before bringing them to the pre-school session.

Please send a spare set of clothes for your child as accidents do happen.

## **Collecting children**

Please remember that your child is your responsibility until a staff member signs them into the pre-school. At the end of the session the child will be handed back and is then your responsibility again.

Please collect your child promptly at the end of each session and always inform the Supervisor if anyone other than the known parent or carer of the child will be collecting them and sign the relevant form. We should like to stress the importance of this for the safety and wellbeing of all children.

In the event of a child not being collected from the group at the end of a session two members of staff will remain with the child. If the parents or emergency contact cannot be reached after one hour, staff will telephone the appropriate person at Wokingham Social Care Department through their Social Care Duty Team.

**Please remember to inform the Supervisors of any changes of home and emergency contact addresses, and telephone numbers (including mobile phone numbers).**

## **Security**

We provide a safe place for children to learn through play. Please help us to keep it safe by keeping the outside gate closed and bolted at all times. People visiting the setting will be recorded in our visitors' book.

Only staff, committee members and recorded visitors are allowed in the pre-school area during pre-school sessions

## **Health and Safety**

Young children are prone to various illnesses. Please notify Pre-school if your child is absent through sickness or for any other reason.

With tummy bugs you should allow a clear 48 hours before letting them return to Pre-School. For exclusion periods for other illnesses, please see the notice board.

When a child becomes ill during pre-school, we keep them as comfortable as possible until a parent or carer can collect them.

Please use your discretion with regard to sending your child back to pre-school after any illness, however minor.

Children do occasionally pick up head lice whilst socialising. Should you notice this problem, please inform the staff who can give advice on dealing with it and discretely alert other parents to be on the lookout also.

First Aid materials are available, and all staff are Paediatric First Aid trained. Accidents, however minor, are recorded in an accident book and parents are informed and asked to countersign that they have received information about the accident and about any treatment given.

Basic hygiene rules are observed at pre-school. Staff and children wash their hands after using the toilet facilities and before handling food and drink.

Smoking is not permitted in any part of the building, the pre-school garden or on any pre-school walks or outings.

Fire drills are carried out every half term.

We recommend that where children have hair longer than collar length, parents should encourage them to wear it tied back at preschool. If

children have pierced ears it is advisable to remove earrings for pre-school sessions to avoid damage to the ear.

## **Parental Involvement**

We encourage parents to be involved with their child at pre-school whenever possible, from helping them to settle in, to becoming members of one of the committees.

For the Management Committee please contact the Chair.

## **Events during the year include:**

### **In pre-school:**

In the Autumn term we hold a short Harvest service in the pre-school room and invite parents to join us.

At Christmas every child has the opportunity to be in a simple nativity play. This takes place in the church in front of parents during a preschool session.

Our Christmas fair is on a Saturday in late November or early December.

We have an annual Sponsored Pentathlon Event and an Open Day.

### **In Church:**

On Christmas Eve many pre-school families like to attend the Christingle service at 3.30 pm, organised by Linda Galpin, the St. James' Church children's worker.

Our families also enjoy coming to 'Messy Church', a monthly family friendly event based on craft and a Bible story.

## **Anniversary**

St James' Pre-School took great joy in celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2014. It was originally set up by a group of mums from the church who



saw a need for a 'playgroup' for young children and families within the community.

Whilst it has changed in a number of ways over the years, its main focus remains: to provide a small caring environment based on Christian values which enable children to flourish and grow in every way.

## **Ofsted**

Ofsted have rated us as '**Outstanding**' with these commendations:

"Children enjoy exploring the wide range of exciting activities that staff design."

"Children have very high standards of behaviour and confidence. Staff nurture children's very high levels of emotional well-being."

"Close working relationships help parents to be fully involved in their children's learning and care."

"All children make exceptional progress from their individual starting points and are very well-prepared for their next stage in learning."

## **Parental Feedback**

"The staff at St. James' Pre-school made my daughter very welcome and she bonded very well with her key person. My daughter has gained in confidence thanks to their help"

"I would like to say how wonderful all the teachers have been at St. James' Pre-school. It has been a fantastic introduction to school life for them both and they have thoroughly enjoyed their time there!"

"My daughter had a wonderful time at Pre-School and grew fond of all the staff. She loved the garden, finding snails and looking for frogs! She loved the Snow White outfit. It's a shame to be leaving"

“The pre-school team have been exceptional in understanding my son and developing his imagination. His vocabulary and numerical skills are utterly wonderful; I know it is owed a great deal to the staff of St. James. I am confident that being part of St. James Pre-school has prepared him well for his new adventure. It will be a sad goodbye to the hardworking and dedicated team.”

## **Fees**

The fees for the school year 2021 – 2022 are £16.00 per session. However, once a child has reached the age of 3 years by the **start** of a term, they are then funded by Wokingham Borough Council. Some two-year-olds are also eligible. This funding may be shared across two settings. A lunch club session is £4.00 per day and early drop-off is £2.00 per session.

Fees are payable in advance at the beginning of each half term. Fees can also be paid weekly, or monthly, or by the Credit Voucher Scheme. Refunds cannot be given for sickness or for holidays taken in term time.

A half term's notice to withdraw a child from pre-school must be given in writing to the Supervisors.

## **Moving on**

Some children stay with us until they start Reception (Foundation 2). Others move on to a nursery at some point.

Each child is different. Some benefit from a small environment more than others. Frequent changes can be difficult for young children.

Nursery schools and Pre-schools all follow the same Early Years Foundation Stage set by the government. Our staff are fully qualified to work with all children from birth to the age of five. It is simply a matter of what is best for your child.

## **Questions about moving on**

If a nursery school offers a place to your child do you have to take it?

No, you can defer it. You won't risk losing the place. Each term they will offer places to the oldest children on their waiting list first.

Will a place in a nursery school give my child a better chance of getting a place in the linked Primary School?

No, the catchment area for the school is different to that of the nursery and will still apply.

Will a place at nursery school give my child an educational advantage when they start school?

Not necessarily. All placements offer the same basic curriculum. At St James pre-school we prioritise a child's emotional and social development which is foundational to academic learning. Different children flourish in different settings.

## **Records**

Pre-school is required by Ofsted to keep full details of the children attending the group. These include home, work and emergency contact numbers. These details are open to inspection by the parents/guardians of the individual child and Ofsted.

Some records are stored in a secure cupboard for security and confidentiality. Some information relating to admissions, registration and contact details is held on a very secure database site to which only a few people have password access.

## **Organisation**

The Pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is run by a committee, which consists of:

- A Chairperson
- Parent members
- The Manager
- Co-opted members as appropriate.

The Committee employ the staff who are responsible for all the children in their care and day-to-day activities.

A copy of the constitution and all our policies and procedures are kept in the parent pack ring binder in the pre-school cloakroom. The Supervisors will be pleased to show you these documents if you wish to see them. Policies and procedures are also on the web page.

## **Complaints Procedure**

St James Pre-school enjoys good relationships between staff and parents.

Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns or anxieties they may have about their child or any aspect of our provision with the Pre-School Supervisor.

We find that the vast majority of concerns can be dealt with informally.

Staff are not expected to respond to issues outside of normal working hours other than to make an appointment.

Should it not be possible to resolve a concern informally, parents may make a formal written complaint to the Pre-School Chairperson via email or by letter via the church office.

For further details, please refer to our complaints procedure policy which is to be found on our web page and in the parent pack folder in the pre-school cloakroom.

## **Useful Information**

For information and general enquiries, please phone:

St. James' Church Office      0118 9662568  
9.00am – 1.00pm Monday - Friday  
Pre-School Mobile            07305 399689  
8.45am – 3.30pm Monday – Friday  
Email                                [jamespreschool@outlook.com](mailto:jamespreschool@outlook.com)  
Web site                            [www.st-james-preschool.com](http://www.st-james-preschool.com)

### **Admissions**

Penny Foreman                    [stjamesadmissions@hotmail.com](mailto:stjamesadmissions@hotmail.com)

### **Manager**

Mrs Elaine Hawkes                [jamespreschool@outlook.com](mailto:jamespreschool@outlook.com)

### **Chairperson**

Mrs Nicola Tivey                    [chairstjamespreschool@outlook.com](mailto:chairstjamespreschool@outlook.com)

### **Treasurer**

Mrs Hilary Reed                    [treasurerstjamespreschool@outlook.com](mailto:treasurerstjamespreschool@outlook.com)

### **Church Information**

An all-age Family Worship service is held every fourth Sunday in the month at 10.30am.

Family Morning Worship on all other Sundays is at 10.30am where there are groups for children and young people, as well as toy bags for very young children.

'Messy Church' is a family friendly event based on craft and a Bible story. It takes place on the 2nd Sunday of the month from 4-6pm and includes a meal.