

Welcome to Little Doves Christian Pre-School and thank you for registering your child with us. We know how important your child is and aim to deliver the highest quality of care and education to help them to achieve their best.

This guide aims to provide you with an introduction to our routines, our approach to supporting your child's learning and development and how we aim to work together with you to best meet your child's individual needs. This should be read alongside all the other information on our website ([www.littledovescp.org.uk](http://www.littledovescp.org.uk)) for a full description of our pre-school.

### **Our pre-school aims to:**

- provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age; in a safe and nurturing environment
- work in partnership with parents/carers to help children to learn and develop;
- add to the life and well-being of the local community, providing links with other activities at St Paul's Church and the benefice.
- offer children and their parents/carers a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

### **Parents/carers**

You are regarded as members of our pre-school who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be:

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

### **Children's development and learning**

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 helpers;
- has the chance to join in with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;
- is helped to take forward their learning and development by being guided to build on what they already know and can do;
- has a key person who makes sure each child makes progress;
- is in a pre-school that sees parents/carers as partners in helping each child to learn and develop; and
- is in a pre-school in which parents/carers help to shape the service it offers.

## *The Early Years Foundation Stage*

Provision for the development and learning of children from birth to 5 years is guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our provision reflects the four overarching principles of the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DfE 2021):

- *A Unique Child*  
Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- *Positive Relationships*  
Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- *Enabling Environments*  
Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and/or carers.
- *Learning and Development*  
Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

## **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 pre-school helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

*The Areas of Development and Learning comprise:*

- *Prime Areas*
  - Personal, social and emotional development.
  - Physical development.
  - Communication and language.
- *Specific Areas*
  - Literacy.
  - Mathematics.
  - Understanding the world.
  - Expressive arts and design.

For each area, the level of progress that children are expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the 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 school education.

We refer to non-statutory curriculum guidance to support our professional judgment as we assess each child's progress and level of development as they progress towards the Early Learning Goals. We have regard to these when we assess children and plan for their learning by creating a curriculum that is ambitious and meets every child's needs. Our educational programmes support children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for:

#### *Personal, social and emotional development*

- self-regulation
- managing self
- building relationships

#### *Physical development*

- gross motor skills
- fine motor skills

#### *Communication and language*

- listening, attention and understanding
- speaking

#### *Literacy*

- comprehension
- word reading
- writing

#### *Mathematics*

- number
- numerical patterns

#### *Understanding the world*

- past and present
- people, culture and communities
- the natural world

#### *Expressive arts and design*

- creating with materials
- being imaginative and expressive

### **Our approach to learning and development and assessment**

#### *Learning through play*

Being active and playing supports young children's learning and development through doing and talking. This is how children learn to think about and understand the world around them. We use the EYFS 2021 statutory education programmes to plan and provide opportunities which will help children to make progress in all areas of learning. This programme is made up of a mixture of activities that children

plan and organise for themselves and activities planned and led by practitioners.

### *Characteristics of effective learning*

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Early Years Foundation Stage as:

- playing and exploring - engagement;
- active learning - motivation; and
- creating and thinking critically - thinking.

We aim to provide for the characteristics of effective learning by observing how a child is learning and being clear about what we can do and provide in order to support each child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

### *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 or videos of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents/carers know their children best and we will ask you to contribute to assessment by sharing information, through your contact books and WOW certificates, about what your child likes to do at home and how you, as parents/carers, are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our on-going observations. These help us to build a picture of a child's progress during their time with us and form part of children's records of achievement/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.

### *The progress check at age two*

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that we supply parents and carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the three prime areas of learning and development - personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language - when a child is aged between 24 - 36 months. Your child's key person is responsible for completing the check using information from on-going observational assessments carried out as part of our everyday practice, taking account of the views and contributions of parents/carers and other professionals.

### **Progress Checks**

We keep a record of achievement/learning journey for each child. Your child's record of achievement/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.

Your child's key person will work in partnership 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 the key person to identify your child's stage of progress. Together, we will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

On the last page of this booklet there is a flow chart (Developmental Progress Checks Explained) of how all the assessments we carry out fit together and play a part in your child's development and learning.

### **Working together for your children**

We maintain the ratio of adults to children in the pre-school above the requirement that is set by the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements. We also encourage volunteer parent helpers, where possible, to complement these ratios. 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.

### **How you can help your child develop and learn at home**

We will give you age appropriate 'How can you help me with my learning' sheets with ideas of how you can help your child develop in each of the 7 areas of development. You can also get more information on how you can help your child develop their communication skills on the Talk Listen Cuddle website ([www.tlc-essex/info](http://www.tlc-essex/info)) issued by Essex County Council, Early Years and Childcare.

### **How parents/carers take part in the pre-school**

Our pre-school recognises parents/carers as the first and most important educators of their children. All of our staff see themselves as partners with parents/carers in providing care and education for their children. There are many ways in which parents/carers take part in making our pre-school a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents/carers, such as:

- exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with our staff;
- contributing to the progress check at age two;
- helping at sessions of the pre-school;
- sharing their own special interests with the children;
- helping to provide and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;
- being part of the management of the pre-school where appropriate;

- 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/carers in the pre-school.

### **The parents/carers' helping at a session**

Parents/carers can contact Pam if they would like to help at a particular session or sessions of the pre-school. Helping at the session enables parents/carers to see what the day-to-day life of our pre-school is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities. (This is not taking place at the moment because of the restrictions due to the pandemic).

### **Joining in**

Parents/carers can offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children.

We welcome you to visit the pre-school to see it at work or to speak with the staff. For safety reasons we ask you to arrange a time to visit. Quick conversations with staff can happen at drop off or pick up times but if a longer conversation is required then we ask you to make an appointment so that privacy can be arranged and staff to child ratios can be maintained.

### **Key person and your child**

Our pre-school uses a key person approach. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom they are particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that the childcare that we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the pre-school, they will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the pre-school, they will help your child to benefit from our activities. At the end of each term, your child's key person will complete a "Possible Lines of Development" (PLOD) plan so that your child's 'next steps' of development can be identified and goals set for the next term.

### **Learning opportunities for adults**

As well as gaining childcare qualifications, our staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with thinking about early years care and education. We also keep up-to-date with best practice, as a member of the Early Years Alliance, through *Under 5* magazine and other publications produced by the Alliance. The current copy of *Under 5* can be emailed to you upon request.

### **The pre-school's timetable and routines**

Our 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 day in our pre-school are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that they are 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**

We organise our 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. We strongly recommend that your child attends regularly as this helps them settle in quickly and get the most out of their pre-school education.

## **Snacks and meals**

We make snacks and meals a social time at which children and adults eat together. We have a free flow style buffet snack where children can choose when they would like something to eat and can choose what they would like to eat. We plan the menus for snacks so that they provide the children with healthy and nutritious food. Please tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will plan accordingly. At lunchtime the staff and children all sit together and eat their packed lunches.

## **Clothing**

We provide aprons for the children when they play with messy activities. We have a 'uniform' in the form of t-shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces which can be purchased and helps prevent spoiling best clothes. However, we do want you to be aware that clothing may get spoilt/dirty during the pre-school activities. We encourage children to gain the skills that 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 that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

## **Policies**

Our staff can explain our policies and procedures to you. Copies of which are available to read in the Policies and Procedures File at the pre-school.

Our policies help us to make sure that the service provided by our 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 their parents/carers.



Our staff work together to adopt the policies and they all have the opportunity to review and update if necessary the policies at our regular staff meetings. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling our pre-school to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

### **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:

- processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject [you and your family]
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up-to-date
- kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects [you and your family] for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed
- 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

Our Data Protection and Privacy Notice is available to read on our website giving you further details of how we fulfil our obligations with regard to your data.

### **Safeguarding children**

Our pre-school has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. Our employment practices ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role and help to protect children against the likelihood of abuse in our pre-school and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff. All staff are required to have an enhanced DBS check.

Our way of working with children and their parents/carers ensures that 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.

### **Special needs**

To make sure that our provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have. We work to the requirements of



the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015).

Please see our SEND Local Offer on our website (About - SEND).

## **The management of our pre-school**

Our pre-school is a limited company with charity status and is managed by a team of trustees, two of which are appointed by St Paul's Church Council.

The trustees include the registered person with Ofsted (the manager) and are responsible for:

- managing our finances;
- employing and managing our staff;
- making sure that we have, and work to, policies that help us to provide a high quality service; and
- making sure that we work in partnership with parents/carers.

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents/carers of all of the children who attend our pre-school. It is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's plan and takes place in the summer term.

Our pre-school has a 'Friends of Little Doves' closed Facebook page which acts as a parent support group. This group is made up of past and present parents/carers of the children who have attended/attend the pre-school. The group shares information/news/ activities happening at the pre-school and posts requests for helps with fundraising events and any maintenance needs parents/carers might be able to help with. The administrator of Facebook page is a trustee.

## **Fees**

The fees are available to view on the website (Info – Sessions & Fees). Details of when and how they can be paid are in the Parent Contract which each parent is asked to read and sign before their child starts at the pre-school. This can be found on the website (Info – Parent Contract)

For your child to keep their place at our pre-school, you must pay the fees. We are in receipt of Free Early Education Entitlement funding for two, three and four year olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply. For more information on Free Early Education Entitlement funding please visit Essex County Council website: <http://dnn.essex.gov.uk/eycp/FUNDING/EEEE34.aspx>

## **Starting at our pre-school**

### *The first days*

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. To make sure that this is the case, our staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the pre-school. Our policy on the role of the key person and Settling-in is available

to read in the Policy and Procedures File at the pre-school.

Please also read our 'Top Tips for new starters' on our website (Info – Top Tips for new starts).

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

**Developmental Progress Checks Explained next page**

# Developmental Progress Checks Explained

