



Registered charity No; 1035144  
www.stmichaelspreschool.info

## **Saint Michael's Pre-School Pre-school Prospectus**

### **Aim**

Saint Michael's Pre-school aims to:

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

As a member of Saint Michael's Pre-school, your child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment;
- is given generous care and attention, because of our high ratio of adults to children;
- 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 worker who makes sure your child makes satisfying progress;
- is in a pre-school which sees you as a partner in helping your child to learn and develop; and
- is in a pre-school in which parents help to shape the service it offers.

The service offered by Saint Michael's pre-school.

The Pre-school is open during term times on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays between 9.30am and 1200 noon. We provide care and education for young children between the ages of 2½ years and 5 years.

The curriculum provided by Saint Michael's Pre-school

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by Pre-school helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are right for their age and stage of development.

For children between the ages of 3 and 5 years, the pre-school provides a curriculum for the foundation stage of education. This curriculum is set out in a document, published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Department for Education and Skills, and called Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Saint Michael's Pre-school follows this guidance.

The guidance divides children's learning and development into six areas:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- communication, language and literacy development;
- mathematical development;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development; and
- creative development.

For each area, the guidance sets out early learning goals. These goals state what it is expected that child will know and be able to do by the end of the reception year of their education.

For each early learning goal, the guidance sets out stepping stones, which describe the stages through which children are likely to pass as they move to achievement of the goal. Saint Michael's Pre-school uses the early learning goals and their stepping stones to help us to trace each child's progress and to enable us to provide the right activities to help all of the children move towards achievement of the early learning goals.

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

This area of children's development covers:

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

### **Communication language and literacy:**

This area of children's development covers:

- being able to use conversation with one other person, in small groups and in large groups to talk with and listen to others;
- adding to their vocabulary by learning the meaning of and being able to use - new words;
- being able to use words to describe their experiences;
- getting to know the sounds and letters which make up the words we use;
- listening to - and talking about - stories;
- knowing how to handle books and that they can be a source of stories and information;
- knowing the purposes for which we use writing; and
- making their own attempts at writing.

## **The management of Saint Michael's Pre-school**

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

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

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

### **Fees**

The fees are £7.00 per session (as at 01/09/2005), payable termly in advance.

Fees must still be paid if children are absent without notice for a short period of time. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, talk to the committee chair, or the Pre-school supervisor. For your child to keep her/his place at the pre-school you must pay the fees or we must receive nursery education funding for your child.

### **Resources Fee**

From September, we have a resources fee of £25.00 per child for each of the 5 terms, regardless of the number of sessions attended. For parents or guardians who join the committee and attend at least 4 meetings a year, the fee will be reduced to £10 per term.

## **Starting at Saint Michael's Pre-school**

### **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 pre-school. The pre-school has a policy about helping children to settle into the pre-school: a copy is enclosed in this prospectus.

### **Clothing**

The pre-school provides protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities.

The pre-school 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.

Saint Michael's Pre-school hopes that you and your child enjoy being members of the pre-school and that you both find part in our activities interesting and stimulating. The staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.

### **The parents' rota**

The pre-school has a rota which allows you, should you wish, to help at a particular session or sessions of the pre-school. Helping at the session enables you to see what the day-to-day life of the pre-school is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities.

### **Joining in**

Joining the rota is not the only means of taking part in the life of the pre-school. You can offer to take part in a session by sharing your own interests and skills with the children.

Do feel free to arrange to drop into the pre-school, if you would like to see it at work or to speak with the staff.

### **Key workers**

The pre-school has a key worker system. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom she/he is particularly responsible. Your child's key worker will be the person who works with you to make sure that what the pre-school provides is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the pre-school, she/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the pre-school, she/he will help your child to benefit from the pre-school's activities.

### **Records of achievement**

The pre-school keeps a record of achievement for each child. Staff and parents working together on their children's records of achievement is one of the ways in which Saint Michael's Pre-school and parents work in partnership. Your child's record of achievement 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 worker will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key worker to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the key worker will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

### **Learning opportunities for adults**

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

The pre-school also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice in early years care and education through publications produced by the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

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

Saint Michael's 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 pre-school's session are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that she/he is 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**

The first part of the session at Pre-school is devoted to free-play and the children are encouraged to make their own choices from the activities available. Some of these activities change on a daily basis (our toy/activity rota is displayed on our notice board in the entrance hall). The children always have access to painting, writing and drawing materials as well as play dough the book corner and sand or water play. There is also an adult led craft or science activity which usually follows a set theme.

Once the children have all arrived at the Pre-school, we stop for 5-10 minutes to call the register and to fill in our weather board with the day, month, season and the current weather.

Half way through the session the toys are tidied away and the children are encouraged to help with this task. We then have a snack of a drink and biscuit or fruit. The pre-school makes this a social time at which children and adults sit together. This time is often used to work on colour, number, and shape and name recognition.

After this the pre-school sets up a physical activity, such as riding tricycles, ring games, sports equipment, etc. The session is closed with a story and singing.

## **Policies**

Copies of the pre-school's policies are available from the Pre-school supervisor.

The pre-school's policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the 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 her/his parents.

The staff and parents of the pre-school work together to adopt the policies and they all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the pre-school to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

## **Special needs**

As part of the pre-school's policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs which a child may have.

The pre-school works to the requirements of the 1993 Education Act and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2000). The Pre-schools' Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Jill Coghlan.

## **Mathematical development**

This area of children's development covers:

- building up ideas about *how many*, *how much*, *how far* and *how big*;
- building up ideas about patterns, the shape of objects and parts of objects, and the amount of space taken up by objects;
- starting to understand that numbers help us to answer questions about *how many*, *how much*, *how far* and *how big*;
- building up ideas about how to use counting to find out *how many*; and
- being introduced to finding the result of adding more or taking away from the amount we already have.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

This area of children's development covers:

- finding out about the natural world and how it works;
- finding out about the made world and how it works;
- learning how to choose - and use - the right tool for a task;
- starting to put together ideas about past and present and the links between them;
- beginning to learn about their locality and its special features; and
- learning about their own and other cultures.

## **Physical development**

This area of children's development covers:

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

## Creative development

This area of children's development covers:

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

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children think. Saint Michael's Pre-school uses the early learning goals and their stepping stones 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 activities. In all activities information from the early learning goals and stepping stones has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

## Working together for your children

Saint Michael's Pre-school has a high ratio of adults to children in the setting. 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.

The staff who work at Saint Michael's Pre-school are:

Jill Tomlinson	Pre-school Supervisor
Debbie Tindall	Assistant Pre-school Supervisor
Denise Collom (Maternity Leave)	Pre-school Assistant
Wendy Steggles	Pre-school Assistant
Lesley Stringer	Pre-school Assistant
Jo Bayliss	Pre-school Assistant
Tina (Maternity Cover)	Pre-school Assistant

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

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, Saint Michael's Pre-school recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of 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 pre-school 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 pre-school;
- 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 pre-school;
- 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 in the pre-school.