

# PROSPECTUS

**St. John's Pre-school, Merrow**

**St. John's Centre**

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## INTRODUCTION

**St John's Pre-school offers play, education and care facilities for children from the age of 2 to 5 years. We meet from 9.30am to 12.30pm, Monday to Friday during term time for 36 weeks of the year. We follow school terms as closely as possible.**

Our Pre-school is based at the St John's Centre in Merrow, where we enjoy use of a large, modern church hall. We have an enclosed area for outside play and a patch of garden for growing flowers, fruit and vegetables.

We have an excellent range of equipment and resources, and offer a wide range of activities so that our children can have fun learning through play, both indoors and outdoors. The St John's Centre also has the benefit of a large car park and foyer to facilitate the drop-off and collection of the children at the Pre-school.

Established in 1968 as Merrow Playgroup Association and renamed in 2002 as St John's Pre-school, we are a long standing community group and a registered charity (Number 1026264), run by a committee of volunteer parents, for children in the local and surrounding areas. We benefit from the support of Surrey County Council Early Years Services. We are also a member of the Early Years Alliance (EYA) and enjoy a close association with St. John's Church and links with local schools.

We were last inspected by OFSTED in September 2019 when we were rated as 'good'.

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good



Excerpt from the report...

*This small and dedicated staff team places an importance on helping children to settle quickly into the pre-school. Children have strong bonds with staff members, who are attentive and caring. Staff know each child well and how to help them to develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Children are happy and engaged learners. They enjoy making their own choices in their play and staff support their emerging interests to add further challenges in their learning. Staff take pride in providing stimulating activities and resources to spark children's curiosity and help them to gain new skills and abilities. Children behave well. Staff clearly explain their expectations for behaviour and are good role models. Children show an increasing awareness of how to control their own emotions and to share and work with others. They receive constant praise for their achievements and are encouraged to try things for themselves. Children are gaining independence skills in their own self-care such as dressing themselves and putting on their shoes for outdoor play. They participate in group times and patiently wait for their turn in circle and story time.*

The full report can be found [here](#)

### **We aim:**

- to enhance the development and education of children under school age through play
- where parental involvement is welcomed and encouraged
- to provide a fun and stimulating environment which is safe and secure
- to work within a framework which ensures equality of opportunity for all children and families

### **We offer:**

- fun and friendship with other children and a dedicated team of staff;
- a specially tailored curriculum with clear learning outcomes
- individual care and attention made possible by a high ratio of adults to children
- the support of a key person for each child
- a wide range of equipment and resources
- opportunities for you and your family to be directly involved in the activities of the group and in your child's progress

# CURRICULUM

At St John's Pre-school we follow a structure of care, learning and development for children up to the age of 5 years of age known as the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS has **seven areas of learning** and development that shape our educational programme. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The three prime areas are described below.

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

Children are helped to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

## **2. Communication and language development**

Children are given opportunities to experience a language rich environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

## **3. Physical development**

Children are given opportunities to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

We are also required to support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are described below.

#### **4. Literacy development**

Children are encouraged to recognise their name and link sounds and letters. They have free access to books through the book corner and gain enjoyment from shared stories, nursery rhymes and poems. We also encourage 'mark making' either in the mark making area, to which the children have free access, or through painting and other activities which develops the gross and fine motor skills needed to control a pencil. When children are ready and show an interest we support them in forming the letters in their names.

#### **5. Mathematics**

Children are provided with opportunities to develop their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, shapes, spaces, and measures.

#### **6. Understanding the world**

Children are guided to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

#### **7. Expressive arts and design**

Children are given opportunities to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

**Children's progress will be at different rates and individual achievements will vary. However, all children are encouraged to make maximum progress towards the early learning goals.**

**If you wish to discuss any of the above please contact the Head of Pre-school. For more information on the EYFS framework, please visit the Department for Education website [here](#)**

## A TYPICAL SESSION

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>09.30</b>	<b>Children arrive</b>	Hanging up coats & bags, putting fruit in the snack box, finding their own name.
<b>09.45</b>	<b>Register</b>	Counting of the children, discussing the weather and singing nursery rhymes.
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Free Play / Themed Activities</b>	Sand / water play, play dough, outdoor play, table top activities, painting, role play area, book / quiet area, math's and mark-making areas, ICT, gardening.
<b>10.15</b>	<b>Snack bar is opened</b>	Eating the snack you have provided and, where possible, serving themselves with the drink of their choice (milk or water).
<b>11.45/ 12.00</b>	<b>Tidy-up time</b>	Everyone is encouraged to become involved in order to participate in group activities
<b>12.00</b>	<b>Whole group activity</b>	Adult led activities, including music and movement, P.E. & parachute games.
<b>12.15</b>	<b>Circle Time</b>	Stories, show and tell, nursery rhymes and singing.
<b>12.30</b>	<b>Home Time</b>	Children are called one by one to collect their things before being returned to their carers.

## STAFF

We are proud of the high ratio of adults to children in our Pre-school, ensuring individual attention is given to the needs and development of each child. Our enthusiastic team of staff and their qualifications are listed below. We also have extra 'bank' staff that we can call upon if necessary. All our staff are given regular training opportunities.

Name	Title	Qualifications
Amanda Bazley	Head of Pre-school, SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead	NNEB; NVQ 3 CCYP; NVQ 4 CCLD; First Aid, ILM level 3
Suzanne State	Deputy Safeguarding Lead	NVQ 3, First Aid
Carol Gray	Pre-school Assistant	First Aid
Jackie Hobbs	Pre-school Assistant	

### Key person system

Our key person system gives each member of staff particular responsibility for small groups of children. Each child in the group has one special adult to relate to, which can make settling into the group much easier. In addition, the key person is responsible for collating a file of observations and samples of creative work for each of their designated children, which enables them to tailor the curriculum to the child's individual needs. The key person works with parents to ensure their child is supported in reaching their full potential. Parents may discuss their child's progress or any other issues by appointment at the beginning of the session, or during their termly parent consultations.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

The number of adults present in our Pre-school enables us to provide individual attention for each child regards of their ability. Each child is given the support and time to be able to progress at his/her own pace in all areas of development. We are experienced in working closely with professionals across the range of special needs. If you would like to discuss the group's ability to meet your own child's needs please talk to Amanda Bazley, our Head of Pre-school. Our full special educational needs and disabilities policy is available on our website [www.saintjohnspreschool.org.uk](http://www.saintjohnspreschool.org.uk), or on request from Amanda.

## **Child Protection**

Each member of staff has undergone an Enhance Disclosure and Barring Check and will undertake a mandatory 'What to do if' Safeguarding course. For further information on Safeguarding, please see our policies and procedures available on our website [www.saintjohnspreschool.org.uk](http://www.saintjohnspreschool.org.uk).

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS**

We recognise parents as the first and most important educators of their young children. We are pleased to be able to support you and work in partnership with you. If you speak a language other than English at home, we are especially keen to involve you in helping us to compile a list of 'useful phrases' for us to use with the children in Pre-school.

Parents are welcome to come in and encouraged to help, play, read or share a particular skill with the children. Parents can also assist with fundraising initiatives, which enable us to buy new and improved equipment for the Pre-school. Finally, parents can take part in the management of the Pre-school by joining the parent committee.

## **PARENT COMMITTEE**

St John's Pre-school is run by a committee of volunteer parents, which ensures that major decision-making is in the hands of the parents who use the group. The committee's responsibilities include reviewing both policy and practice, recruiting and appraising staff and fundraising. Committee members are elected annually at the AGM held during the summer term but you can join the committee at any point during the year.

The Pre-school only exists whilst there are parents to run it, which is one very good reason to get involved. The level of commitment depends on what time you can offer, as well as the interests or expertise that you have. Committee meetings are held every half term and these are a great opportunity to get to know other parents, as well as a time to do business!

Although all positions are voluntary, it is very rewarding to feel that you have an active role in the Pre-school and really can make a difference.

## **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

Policy statements and procedures outlining how the Pre-school is run are available on our website [www.saintjohnspreschool.org.uk](http://www.saintjohnspreschool.org.uk). All our policies are designed to offer the best possible experience for the children and families in the group. Our policies are reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with Surrey County Council and PLA guidelines. Comments or suggestions from parents are always welcome.

## **FEES & FUNDING**

### **Administration Fees**

There is a voluntary £40 fee payable termly

### **Free Early Education for 2 year olds**

### **Feet Funding**

The Government can offer up to 15 hours of free early education and childcare a week for two year olds who fall under certain criteria. Please check [www.surreycc.gov.uk/feet](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/feet) to see if you qualify. Please ask Amanda Bazley for further information.



## **Early Years Free Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds**

Current government funding is available for children aged 3-4 years old and is administered by Surrey County Council. This entitles a child to 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year. 36 weeks of this entitlement can be used for the Pre-school.

Funding from Surrey County Council becomes available from the term after your child's third birthday. The cut off dates for terms are the 31st December, 31st March and 31<sup>st</sup> August. For example, a child born on or after the 1st September would receive funding from the following January. For more information about the Early Years Free Entitlement, visit the Surrey County Council website <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk>.

## **Fees for unfunded children**

Our fees for unfunded children (i.e. children who do not yet qualify for the Early Years Free Entitlement) are £19.50 per session. Fees for all children are payable at the beginning of every term. For unfunded children there is a possibility to pay half termly. All fees must be paid within the timescale stated on the fees statement.

Fees continue to be payable if a child is absent without notice or for a short time, or if they are absent for a holiday. In cases of prolonged absence, parents should contact the Treasurer about fee payment ([admin@saintjohnspreschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@saintjohnspreschool.org.uk)). Every child's attendance at the Pre-school is conditional upon continued payment of any necessary fees. All queries relating to fees should be addressed to the Treasurer. In cases where the Pre-school cannot open due to extenuating circumstances, fees are non-refundable. This guarantees a child's place on re-opening.

## **Returned Payments**

In the event of a cheque being return to the Pre School's account marked unpaid, we will contact the parents/guardian of the child concerned to seek alternative payment. Any charges that are passed onto the Pre School by the bank will be passed to the child's family.

## **Late collection charge**

As the main hall at the St. John's Centre is normally booked to other users from 1pm, it is imperative that children are collected promptly in order to guarantee their safety. We appreciate that there may be occasional instances of children being collected late from Pre-school, and where there is a reasonable explanation, no further action will be taken. However, the Head of Pre-school reserves the right to charge £10 for the late collection of a child. For further information, please see our policies and procedures available on our website.

### **Notice period**

Half a term's notice must be given if parents wish to withdraw their child permanently from the Pre-school, during which time no fees will be refunded.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Admission to St John's Pre-school is open to every family in the community and to families from surrounding areas when places are available.

We recognise that choosing a pre-school is an important decision and we therefore welcome visits by prospective parents wishing to have a look around during a session. To arrange a visit, please contact Amanda Bazley, Head of Pre-school by e-mail or telephone (see page 11 for contact details). A registration form will be issued during the visit. On receipt of the completed registration form and registration fee, your child's name will either be placed on a waiting list or, if appropriate, admitted immediately.

If you would like your child to start later than September, a retainer of £100 per session per term must be paid to guarantee your choice of start date. For example, if you wish to reserve two sessions a week for the spring or summer term(s) you would be required to pay £200 per term to guarantee the place. All admissions are at the discretion of the Head of Pre-school.

## **INDUCTION**

During the spring term we invite parents of children due to start Pre-school for an informal meeting and tour of the Pre-school. This gives you an opportunity to learn more about what your child will be doing and how the Pre-school is run.

All children starting in September are invited to an induction visit with their parents during the summer term when they can meet and play with the staff and other children who are new to the Pre-school. If your child starts in January or April you will have the opportunity to visit the Pre-school with your child the term before.

We will confirm the sessions on offer to your child the term before your child starts the Pre-school. Once you have accepted these sessions you will be provided with an induction pack providing all the relevant information you need for your child to start at the Pre School.

## **STARTING PRE-SCHOOL**

### **The first sessions**

A child who is tense or unhappy will not be able to play or learn properly, so it is important for parents and pre-school staff to work together to help the child to feel confident and secure in the group. This takes longer for some children than for others so do not feel worried if your child takes a while to settle. You are welcome to stay with your child for as long as is required for them to settle in. Supported by their key person, each child will build up to a full session beginning with one hour.

### **What to wear**

We use lots of materials, including sand, paint and water so it is advisable to send children dressed in clothes that are easily washable and not too new. Alternatively, you can help raise money for Pre-school funds by purchasing our polo shirts and sweatshirts, available from Amanda Bazley.

## What to bring

- a labelled bag containing at least one full change of clothes with a carrier bag for dirty clothes plus nappies/pull-ups, wipes and nappy sacks if required;
- plimsolls for indoor play;
- footwear suitable for outdoor play;
- a snack of fruit / vegetables /breadsticks in a named container.
- Coat
- Winter or summer hat depending on the season.

There is no need to send children with their own drinks because we provide milk or water as part of the snack-bar session.

## Labelling

Everything should be labelled with your child's name. If you would like to purchase name tags and stickers you can do so through [www.easy2name.com](http://www.easy2name.com). The Pre-school will receive a percentage of the cost of your order if you type "St-Johns Pre School GUI" into the 'Name of fundraising group' section of the checkout page.

## Lunch Club

St John's Pre School offers a lunch club for children who attend on a Monday morning, from 12.30 to 1.30pm who are over the age of 3 years. The lunch club is charged at £5.00 a session payable termly. We ask you to provide your child with a healthy packed lunch in a named container.

This session is particularly helpful to children in their run up to starting Infant school. It gives them an opportunity to practice independent eating and gets them used to a slightly longer day.

**We hope that your child's time at Pre-school will be very happy and productive. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.**

Head of Pre-school: Mrs Amanda Bazley Tel: 01483 454625

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