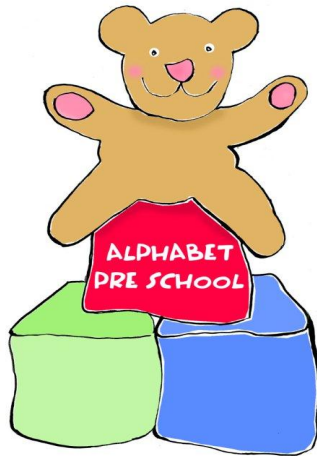


Alphabet Pre-school

(Registered Charity No. 1063223)



Easton Village Hall

Easton

Somerset BA5 1EU

E-mail: enquiries@alphabetpreschool.co.uk

Pre-school telephone during sessions: 01749 871227

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INDEX

WELCOME TO ALPHABET PRE-SCHOOL.....	3
BACKGROUND	3
SESSION TIMES	3
AIMS	4
CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING.....	4
THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE.....	4
HOW WE PROVIDE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING	5
OUR APPROACH TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT.....	6
LEARNING JOURNALS.....	7
WORKING TOGETHER FOR YOUR CHILDREN	7
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS	8
KEY PERSON AND YOUR CHILD	8
HOW PARENTS TAKE PART IN THE SETTING	8
THE PARENTS' ROTA.....	9
JOINING IN	9
THE PRE-SCHOOL'S TIMETABLE AND ROUTINES	9
LINKS WITH SCHOOL.....	10
SNACKS AND MEALS	10
CLOTHING	10
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	10
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN	11
SPECIAL NEEDS	11
THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR PRE-SCHOOL.....	12
FEES	12
ILLNESS	13
PRE-SCHOOL CLOSURE	13
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE	14
COMMITTEE MEMBERS: APRIL 2016	14

WELCOME TO ALPHABET PRE-SCHOOL

In this prospectus we hope to provide you with all the information that you as a parent or carer needs to understand how the pre-school works. We hope that the prospectus is clear but if there is any area you feel is not covered or about which you need more information, please do not hesitate to ask either a staff or committee member. Alphabet Pre-school is a very busy and happy place and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child into our community family.

BACKGROUND

Alphabet Pre-school is a registered charity (No. 1063223) managed by an elected committee of parents, we are affiliated to the Pre-School Learning Alliance and registered with OFSTED. The day to day running of the pre-school is handled by qualified staff consisting of leader, deputy and assistants. Our pre-school welcomes children from two and half years to school age.

We are based in the Mendip village of Easton, holding our sessions in the village hall, a former school building. We value our place at the heart of our community both as a provider of quality, nurturing community childcare and as a social network that provides support, friendship and opportunities for families to be directly involved in their children's pre-school education.

Our curriculum and community focus provides opportunities for you and your family to become involved in the activities of the pre-school. As we are a charity we welcome and rely on the support of parents for example, in our fundraising activities. We have close links with St. Lawrence's school in Westbury-sub-Mendip, where many of our children continue their education.

SESSION TIMES

Alphabet Pre-school is open for during the school academic year, sessions **currently** take place on:

Monday	9.15 until pickup times at either 12.15, to 1pm or 3pm.
Tuesday	<i>At present not opening, could change depending on demand</i>
Wednesday	9.15 until pickup times at either 12.15, 1pm or 3pm.
Thursday	9.15 until 12.15 or 1pm
Friday	9.15 until 12.15 or 1pm

These are our full opening times and we always aim to fill each session. However they are subject to change with the varying requirements of our community, please check when your child is ready to attend.

Children staying after 12.15 bring a lunchbox (with a nice, healthy packed lunch). The varying lengths of our sessions reflect the needs and age range of our children.

AIMS

Our setting aims to:

- Provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age
- Work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop
- Add to the life and well-being of the local community
- Offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

Parents

Parents are regarded as valued and respected members of our pre-school and we strive to keep you informed, involved and consulted at all levels.

As a community based, voluntary managed setting, we also depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep going. Membership of the pre-school carries expectations on parents for their support and commitment.

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 parent helpers
- Has the chance to join in with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together
- Has a personal key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress
- Is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do
- Is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop
- Is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers

The Early Years Foundation Stage

Our provision for children's development and learning is guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (DfE 2014). Our provision reflects the four overarching principles of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and 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 year's provision including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

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 and 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 (the Reception class school year) 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 education.

The *Development Matters* guidance sets out the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the Early Learning Goals. Our pre-school has regard to these matters when we assess children and plan for their learning. Our programme supports children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for:

Personal, social and emotional development

Making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour

Physical development

Moving and handling, health and self-care

Communication and language

Listening and attention, understanding and speaking

Literacy

Reading, writing

Mathematics

Numbers, shape, space and measure

Understanding the world

People and communities, the world, technology

Expressive arts and design

Exploring and using media and materials, being imaginative

Our approach to learning and development and assessment

Learning through play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Our pre-school uses the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance 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 the activity. In all activities, information from 'Development Matters' the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Characteristics of effective learning

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

- Playing and exploring-engagement
- Active learning-motivation
- Creating
- Thinking critically

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 know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they, as parents, are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records. These form part of children's learning journals. 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. The key person is responsible for completing the check using information from ongoing observational assessments carried out as part of our everyday practice, taking account of the views and contributions of parents and other professionals.

Learning Journals

Our pre-school keeps a learning journal for each child. Your child's journal helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and also helps us to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his wellbeing 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/he 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 you can then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

Working together for your children

We maintain the ratio of adults to children in the pre-school that is set by the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements. We try also have 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
- Allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety

Staff working at our setting are:

Name	Job Title
Jenny Rogers	Pre-school Leader
Jayne Marsh	Deputy Pre-school Leader
Dawn Payne	Pre-school Assistant
Sue Pollard	Pre-school Assistant
Clare Blackmore	Volunteer and Bank Staff
Annabelle McLaren	Administrator

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS

As part of our ongoing commitment to childcare we re-evaluate our training needs and address short falls as appropriate. Our pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, which ensures that we are constantly in touch with new thinking in the field of child education and care. The Alliance also offers a wide variety of training courses and welcomes both Pre-school staff and parents. In addition, informal training is available through local meetings and conferences and we will seek to advise parents of these as they arise.

We receive the weekly and monthly Pre-school Learning Alliance magazine offering practical advice and up to date information. We also have access to a number of professional publications. All of these can be viewed on request if you are interested.

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 she/he is 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 setting, she/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at pre-school, she/he will help your child to benefit from the pre-school's activities.

HOW PARENTS TAKE PART IN THE SETTING

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

- Exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress
- Contributing to the progress check at age two
- Helping at sessions of the pre-school when they can
- Sharing their own special interests with the children
- Being part of the management of the pre-school by joining the committee
- Assist in fund raising events
- Joining in any community activities in which pre-school takes part
- Building friendships with other parents here in pre-school

The parents' Rota

We have a Rota, which parents can sign if they would like to help at a particular session or sessions of the setting. Helping at the session enables parents to see what the day-to-day life of Alphabet 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 our Alphabet pre-school. Parents can offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children. Parents have visited the pre-school to talk about being a farmer for example, which was very popular.

We welcome parents to drop into the setting to see it at work or to speak with the staff.

ALPHABET PRE-SCHOOL'S TIMETABLE AND ROUTINES

Our pre-school believes that care and education are equally important in the experiences, which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in the pre-school 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
- Provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning

The day

We organise our sessions so that children can choose from, and work at, a range of activities. In doing so, they build up their ability to select and work through a task to

its completion. The child are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small and large group activities, which introduces them to new experiences and helps them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others. The activities take into account the children's changing energy levels throughout the day and will also cater for their individual needs for rest and quiet activities.

Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them. We feel that it is important for the children to be outdoors on a daily basis (weather permitting) and we have a good range of facilities. These include a large tarmac area, climbing equipment various "ride-on" toys and much more.

Links with school

Links have been forged over the years between our pre-school and St Lawrence Church of England Primary School in Westbury sub Mendip, as the majority of our children transition there. As part of the induction programme for starting at St Lawrence, our four-year olds and their parents have a number of opportunities to meet Mrs Shimmins the teacher. If your child is planned to start at another school in the area, please let us know and we can make contact as early as possible in order to help you and your child build a positive induction relationship with them as well.

Snacks and lunchtimes

Snack and lunch times provide excellent opportunities for our children to develop independence as well as their social skills. They take an active part in setting up the environment and sharing foodstuffs.

We offer a daily snack of toast and milk/water. Parents are asked to contribute 50p each week so we can also provide a broad rainbow of fruit and vegetables for the children to try as well. At lunchtime we ask that you provide a packed lunch of healthy and nutritious food, we have pamphlets with ideas for healthy packed lunches if you require one. Please tell us if your child has any allergies or dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met.

Clothing

Pre-school activities are sometimes messy and therefore we ask that your child wears clothes that they feel comfortable in, which are easily washable and not too new. 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. If you can ensure they come to pre-school in clothing that is also easy for them to manage, that will help them to do this. Green t-shirts and hoody tops with the Alphabet Preschool logo are available from the uniform shop in Wells. For cold/wet weather, coats and wellingtons are needed and for warmer weather, hats and sun cream. Please also provide a change of clothing (in case of accidents), which can be kept in their bag provided by pre-school.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The way we run the pre-school is governed by our policies and procedures. The pre-school committee reviews these annually with input from staff and parents and with regard to Ofsted recommendations and help from the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA). Alphabet Pre-school is a member of the PLA, which is a support network that provides all registered pre-schools with help and advice for all areas of work, from planning children's activities to writing business plans.

Our Pre-school's policies and procedures are very important as they make clear for committee members, staff, volunteers and parents, the principles which pre-school works towards achieving. They aim to reflect The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements within the Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage whilst serving as a constant reminder of the standards our pre-school is working to. They help us to make sure that the service provided is of a high quality and that being a member of the pre-school is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents.

Copies of all the pre-school's policies and procedures are available for you to view in detail in the policies and procedures folder held at pre-school.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

The prime responsibility of the pre-school is to protect our children. Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. We follow guidelines set down by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board to ensure our children are safe within our care at all times.

Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our setting and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures 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 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 a child may have. The pre-school works to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice:0-25 years (2015).

We seek to provide individual attention to each child. All the children can, and are allowed to, progress at their own rates in all areas. We are experienced in working with professionals across a range of special needs and if you would like to discuss the pre-school's ability to meet your child's needs please feel free to contact us.

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Jayne Marsh (Deputy)

THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR 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 our Annual General Meeting. The committee is responsible for:

- Managing the pre-school's finances
- Employing and managing the staff
- Fundraising and organising social events
- Making sure that the pre-school has, and works to, policies that help it to provide a high quality service
- Making sure that the pre-school works in partnership with the children's parents

The committee meets half-termly, in the evenings usually from 7.30pm onwards at a local hostelry. The way we run ourselves as a committee is governed by our Constitution, which is on the pre-school noticeboard.

A list of the current committee, with contact telephone numbers, can be found at the back of the prospectus. Please feel free to contact any committee member directly if you have any questions concerning pre-school.

If you would like to know more about the responsibilities of being a committee member and what the key roles on the committee involve, please ask the committee chair who will be happy to talk to you.

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

Fundraising is a very important part of our pre-school activities, as it is a charity and charges relatively low fees to parents. Fundraising is therefore needed to purchase toys and equipment. We aim to hold at least one fund-raising activity per term and we rely on parents/carers for their support. It's a good way of becoming involved with other parents and the workings of the committee.

Fees

Fees are payable in advance on a monthly basis. Our fees are £4 per hour.

Fees are still applicable if your child is absent or away for a short time, for example, for a holiday. In cases of prolonged absence, parents/carers should consult the committee about fee payment.

We would be grateful if we could be given prior notice of any family holidays to be

taken during term time. During term time fees remain payable throughout the period of absence for the purpose of a holiday.

Please be aware that we operate a **Late Collection Policy** whereby fees may be incurred.

Your child's attendance at the pre-school is conditional upon the continued payment of the pre-school's fees and/or qualification for funding through the government Early Years Education Funding Scheme.

Parents may swap their child's sessions subject to 7 days' notice and the approval of the pre-school leader; we will try to be flexible wherever possible.

The Early Years Education Scheme is the name for the government scheme that provides funding for pre-school children. Children are entitled to funding for up to a total of 15 hours per week from the term after their third birthday. You can split your entitlement between different childcare providers (e.g. pre-school and nursery) but you cannot claim for more than 15 hours in total. Any extra sessions you choose for your child over and above the grant funding will be charged at the £4 hourly rate as described above. For more information please refer to the 'Nursery Education Funding Information for Parents' booklet, which is available at the pre-school or ask our staff.

We are also able to offer places where two year old funding has been awarded by Early Years Entitlements.

Illness

We would ask that you notify the pre-school staff if your child is to miss a session due to illness. We do ask that you do not send your child to pre-school with an infectious disease. Also if your child has had sickness and/or diarrhea please keep them at home for 48 hours after it has stopped, in an attempt to stop the sickness spreading. If your child becomes ill whilst at the pre-school you will be contacted and your child will be able to rest on a fold out bed until your arrival.

If your child is taking medication then the pre-school must be contacted in advance in order to consent to administering such medication. Pre-school staff should be advised as to the nature of the medication. All medication must be clearly labeled with your child's name and the dosage requirements. Any medication must be given directly to pre-school staff for safe storage; parents must also sign a consent form.

Our full health policies are available for you to see in pre-school at any time.

Pre-school closure

In the event of very bad weather or other exceptional circumstances such as a power cut the pre-school may be forced to close. The staff and committee members, via text or telephone, will circulate information for parents about any such closure.

Complaints procedure

If you feel uneasy about any aspect of the pre-school's provision, please speak to the Pre-school Leader or the committee Chair and talk over any worries or anxieties you may have. It is always better if a problem can be resolved informally; however, if you feel the matter is still not resolved then please refer to the complaints procedure, which is included in the welcome pack and on the pre-school notice board for you to view.

Committee Members: November 2016

Position

Chair	Hilary Waters
Treasurer	John Parkhouse
Secretary	Claire Rice

Committee Member

Gillian Charlton

Eliza Wylie

Jo Tucker - in the process of joining us

ADMINISTRATION

Annabelle McLaren

