

WELCOME TO ST PAUL'S BECKENHAM PRE-SCHOOL

In this Handbook and on the web site we aim to give you all the main information you will need.

We aim to ensure each child is:

- In a safe and stimulating environment;
- Has an enjoyable and rewarding time at the Pre-school as we play, learn, and grow together.



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1. Admissions

- Parents & carers are invited to visit with their child during a session.
- Siblings are given priority when applying.
- Two year olds are admitted at the discretion of the Pre-School Manager.

2. Settling In

Some children settle almost immediately, whilst others take several weeks. It is important that your child feels comfortable in the pre-school surroundings before they are left. When the time comes, explain that you are going and will be coming back, say goodbye to your child and go. Staff will deal with tears and offer comfort and reassurance. Do not leave your child without saying goodbye as this does not build trust.

The length of time you leave your child for will depend on how happy and confident or upset your child is. Staff will discuss this with each parent/carer in turn. For instance, we regularly have children in for a first session with the parent/carer staying for just one hour.

Parents are advised to prepare themselves and their child in the following ways:

- Read stories relating to starting school or pre-school
- Talk about the event in a positive way
- Avoid triggers of early morning stress by making sure you have plenty of time to get ready.
- Ensure that you are available during the first week to spend time with your child at pre-school, or be available to return to pre-school should your child become distressed.
- Attend other child friendly environments to get your child used to larger groups of children and different adults.

3. Your Child's Key Person

We use 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 is responsible for providing a learning environment that is right for their needs and interests. When your child first starts, she/he will help your child to settle at pre-school and throughout your child's time with us will help her/him benefit from our activities.

4. Learning Journey

We keep a record of a Learning Journey for each child. Staff and parents working together on their children's records of achievement is one of the ways in which the key person 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 person 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 person to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the key person will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

5. Achieving Positive Behaviour

The pre-school staff believe that love, security and consistency are essential in helping the children grow and learn. Loving discipline with defined boundaries helps to provide such security. We aim to support our children as they learn the standards, values and expected behaviour.

Our policy is to remove a child temporarily from a situation when they are behaving in an unacceptable manner. This may involve sitting them quietly on a chair to explain why their behaviour is unacceptable and what we require of them. The emphasis will be on their wrong choices and not on their character; we do not tell children that they are naughty but rather explain that their action was wrong.

If a child appears to have an ongoing area of difficulty, we may ask to see the parents to discuss at length putting in place a behaviour management plan for their child, that can work at home as well as pre-school.

Biting and other forms of physical injury, including bullying to the other children or to the staff will not be tolerated. We will work together with parents and carers and work out with them a plan for handling their child's behaviour.

6. Parent/Carers Taking Part

Parent/carer involvement is an important aspect of the pre-school. There are many ways to take part such as:-

- discussing your child's progress with her/his key worker, reviewing their learning journal at regular parents meetings;
- exchanging knowledge about your child's needs and interests with the staff;
- helping at a session especially if there is an activity they would like to do with the children that is relevant to the half term theme;
- helping regularly, providing that your child is comfortable with this. Parents who help on a frequent, long-term basis will be DBS checked.
- taking part in special occasions such as end of term events, outings and fund raising activities;
- attending and voting at the Annual Meeting.

7. Arrivals and Departures

Children arrive at 9.00am. A member of staff will be at the door to welcome your child into Pre-school. When your child starts, to help settle them in, please feel free to spend time with your child before you leave, helping to find their name and choose an activity.

If your child is upset a member of staff will take the child aside and settle them.

Parents/Carers should be reassured that they will be asked to return to the pre-school if their child is distressed for any length of time.

At the end of each session staff will open the door and call your child to go home. Please be punctual. It can be very distressing for a child to see his/her peers go home and be the only one left. If you are going to be late, please make every effort to inform staff.

It is very important that you inform staff if someone else is going to collect your child. We will not permit your child to leave the premises with someone we have not been told about and if we do not have their details provided as per the registration form.

8. Late Collection Fees

If Parents/Carers ring to inform us that they are going to be late, they have a 15-minute grace period after the official collection time to arrive at the pre-school. On the first occasion of lateness, this 15-minute period will not be charged. If Parents/Carers do not ring, or do not arrive within the 15-minute grace period, the pre-school reserves the right to make a reasonable charge for every 5 minutes after the 15 minutes have ended.

If late collection continues, we reserve the right to apply a late collection fee of £15 for the first 15 minutes and £5 for every five minutes thereafter. Any additional charges will be added to your regular fees. For further details or our procedures see our Safeguarding Children – Uncollected Child Policy 1.4.

9. Removing A Child

Parents wishing to remove their child from St Paul's Pre-school are required to give 4 weeks written notice.

10. Food & Drink

We promote healthy eating, providing nutritious foods at snack time, talking to the children about different food groups and why we make choices over what we eat. Allergies and dietary needs are disclosed on the registration form so that we can take this into account but we welcome any information on dietary preferences.

We request that parents providing packed lunches do NOT include sweets, chocolate, fizzy drinks or anything containing nuts or nut products. The packed lunches should contain a healthy, balanced, nutritional meal, avoiding processed foods. No food that requires heating up please, and water or squash (no high-sugar drinks) must be in a water bottle, and not a babies bottle. Do ask if you would like more information on healthy eating. Grapes and berries should be cut length ways to avoid choking. Further details of our approach to Healthy Eating are included in our Food and Drink Policy 6.5.

If any child has a serious allergy it may be necessary for us to ask all families to refrain from putting that food in lunch-boxes in an effort to keep our pre-school allergen-free as far as we can.

11. Toys

Children may bring in a toy from home to show the staff and the other children. The toy will be then placed in a basket for safe keeping until the end of the session. Please do not send your child with their favourite toy or bedtime comfort in case it is left behind.

12. Books

At the beginning of each session children may choose one book from the pre-school bookcase to take home. This is to be read with an adult in the family and returned when finished so that another may be chosen. Please teach your child to look after the books. If you lose it, you will be asked to replace it at your own cost.

13. Uniform

The Pre-School offers sweat-shirts with the Pre-School logo on for parents to purchase.

14. Toilets

We encourage children to be independent where possible. The children use the toilet off the main hall, where there are steps to make access to the toilet easier. Children who are in pull-ups/training pants, will be changed during the session as necessary. Please provide your child with spare nappies and wipes in a bag, clearly named.

15. Jewellery

We would prefer the children not to wear earrings or other jewellery at pre-school. However, if this is necessary, studs are the only acceptable earrings to be worn. For safety, any other type of earring or jewellery will be removed on arrival and returned at the end of the session.

16. Outings

Outings are occasionally arranged during pre-school hours. All parents and carers are invited to accompany their children. Consent forms giving staff permission to take the children out, will need to be signed by the parents/carers.

17. Equal Opportunities

All staff are committed to anti-discriminatory practice. All children will be treated with equal respect and consideration, regardless of their gender, culture, linguistics, disabilities and religious background. We will challenge any behaviour spoken or otherwise which contradicts this statement.

Siblings are given priority on admission and all other children are admitted on a first come, first serve basis, including children with special needs as each child is assessed individually regarding our provision.

18. Special Educational Needs Policy

If a child with special needs applies they are assessed on their needs and our ability to meet their needs. Our aim would be to provide for them within our means, taking into consideration all of the children in our group.

19. Complaints Procedure

Please discuss any concerns with the Pre-school Leader as they arise. Many problems begin small, then grow out of proportion if they are not dealt with. You may make an appointment with the Pre-school Leader if you wish to discuss any issue at length.

If after talking with the Pre-school Leader you are still not happy and wish to take the matter further, please contact the Pre-School Chairman:

Liz Spencer
Chairperson
St Paul's Pre-school
Lawn Road,
Beckenham
BR3 1TP

For full details of our procedures please refer to our "Making a Complaint Policy"

20. Policies

A full copy of all St Paul's Pre-school Policies are available on request.

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We aim to give all the children under our care a happy time, ensuring they leave with fond memories of their time at St Paul's Pre-School.

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**St Paul's Pre-School Team**

**September 2025**