



# PROSPECTUS

St Andrew's Pre-school, St Andrew's Church Hall,  
Albert Road, Caversham Heights, Reading RG4 7AW  
Telephone: **07981 195435**

Email: [administrator@standrewspreschoolcaversham.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:administrator@standrewspreschoolcaversham.onmicrosoft.com)  
Website: [www.standrewspreschoolcaversham.org.uk](http://www.standrewspreschoolcaversham.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number **900218**

## Welcome

Welcome to St Andrew's Pre-school. In this booklet you will find information about our Pre-school, how we work, our aims and objectives.

Pre-schools have undergone many changes in the past few years. At St Andrew's we have welcomed the challenge of change with enthusiasm and commitment. We have not forgotten, however, why 'playgroups', or Pre-schools were initially developed: by families for families.

We value the support that we get from our families working on the committee and sharing their many talents, such as art, music and technology. We have become successful because the partnership between Pre-school and family is strong. We listen to our families and endeavour to give them the quality childcare that is their right. Our staff are all parents themselves who understand how traumatic the first, long-term separation can be for both child and parent.

We aim to provide a safe, caring and inclusive environment where children will develop to their full potential. Self-esteem and confidence are reinforced by praise and encouragement. As children progress through the group, they become more independent and self-reliant. However, first and foremost Pre-school should always be fun - learning to share and socialise with peers, enjoying all the activities on offer, having a good time without the pressure of continually needing to achieve.

Hilary Coome, Manager (December 2021)

## What is a Pre-school?

A Pre-school is a charity formed as an alliance between parents and staff to provide quality Pre-school education for their children. Parents are actively involved in all aspects of Pre-school, and without their support the Pre-school would not exist. For more information about how you could help us run Pre-school, see 'The Committee' and 'Sharing your talents' sections.

St Andrew's Pre-school was formed in September 1968. The original aim of the group was to provide a safe, happy and stimulating environment for all children.

Our group philosophy is learning through play, Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

We plan our curriculum with a view to meeting your child's unique needs and by meeting the requirements of the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage. The framework sets out the three prime areas of learning that underpin everything in the early years.

**The three prime areas are:**

- **Communication and language;**
- **Physical development;**
- **Personal, social and emotional development.**

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **four specific areas** **The four specific areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.**

**They are:**

- **Literacy;**
- **Mathematics;**
- **Understanding the world;**
- **Expressive arts and design.**

These seven areas are used to support your child's learning.

Under the guidance of the highly qualified and dedicated teaching team, we are extremely proud to boast truly excellent Ofsted reports. The inspections were carried out in May 1997, July 1999, November 2003, November 2006, November 2009 and January 2015. We were delighted to be given Outstanding in each of the inspections.

Our most recent Ofsted inspection in **June 2019** assessed us in the following areas:

- **Effectiveness of leadership and management**
- **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**
- **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**
- **Outcomes for children**

We were delighted to receive **Outstanding** in each of the above, as well as meeting all of the legal requirements for early years settings.

The Ofsted summary of key findings for parents found that:

- *The manager is passionate and dedicated in her role. She takes great care to implement a range of policies and procedures which promotes children's safety, welfare and learning at a very high level.*

- *The well qualified and enthusiastic team display exceptional teaching skills. They give children time to explore and practice new skills, build confidence in their abilities and fuel their own passion for learning.*
- *The manager monitors children's progress exceptionally well. This allows her to identify children who may need additional support. She offers expert guidance for staff on how to target teaching to help children catch up.*
- *Partnerships with parents are highly successful. Staff involve parents in all aspects of their children's learning. They value parents' contributions highly, and regularly discuss children's interests and next steps.*
- *Staff interact successfully with children and are very skilled in supporting them to gain excellent communication and language skills. For example, children benefit from small group activities with their key person, to help develop skills such as listening and attention.*
- *Staff are extremely skilled and sensitive in helping children of all ages form special bonds with the key person. Children are exceptionally happy, secure and independently explore the environment.*
- *All children, including those who need additional support make exceptional progress in their learning and development from their starting points. They thrive in the highly stimulating environment and are very motivated and eager to learn.*

### **Curriculum and educational programme**

St Andrew's Pre-school aims to help children make progress in the seven areas that are seen as being a foundation for National Curriculum Level 1, when your child enters compulsory education. We adapt the Curriculum, when appropriate, to meet the needs of children with special needs.

The ways in which each unique child engages with other people and their environment are:

### **The Characteristics of Effective Learning**

- playing and exploring,
- active learning and creativity
- critical thinking.

### **The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of learning and Development are interconnected.**

The Prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences. They run through and support learning in all other areas. The Prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS.

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

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive 9 relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

### **Physical Development:**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives<sup>7</sup>. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

**The Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the Prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.**

**Literacy:**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

**Mathematics:**

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

**Understanding the world:**

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them - from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

### **Expressive Arts and Design:**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

### **Observing our children**

We observe and record your child's progress at Pre-school using 'Tapestry', an online journal which is available for you to view and contribute to. It helps us to establish where he/she is in the natural progression and stages of development that most children go through during their Pre-school years. We work closely with our families and share information about your child's development.

The Tapestry system is completely secure. Parents have individual password access.

Hilary Coome implements the educational programme with the support of a very experienced team of staff. Between them, they hold a variety of recognised qualifications, for example NNEB and NVQ 3. The team collectively has over 120 years of experience in educational childcare!

### Daily structure

The Pre-school provides places for up to 30 children per session, 4 days per week, for 38 weeks of the year. We are closed on Fridays. We align ourselves as closely as possible with local primary school term dates.

All children are required to attend a minimum of 3 sessions per week e.g. 1 morning equates to 1 session and all day equates to 2 sessions. We offer morning only sessions and all-day sessions. There is no option to attend afternoon only sessions.

Our Pre-school is very well equipped which enables us to provide a wide variety of opportunities designed to develop the many skills emerging in your child. We have an extensive and diverse range of equipment designed to stimulate and challenge the children while they learn through play.

We focus on retrospective and 'in the moment' planning for the sessions.

The children select from the various activities on offer. We follow an "Open Door" policy which means the children can access the outside play area/garden each day. Some activities will be adult led and adult initiated, but the majority of activities will be child led, based on interests, experiences and extending play over the week.

## **Registration and Admissions**

You can register your child as soon as you wish. **Please refer to our website for full details and also to download our registration form.**

**For new families:** your child must be a minimum age of 2 years and 9 months by 31 August.

**For sibling families only:** where a child of the family has previously attended our setting, we accept children from the age of 2 years and 6 months.

To join our waiting list, families must complete a registration form and pay a non-refundable fee of £20.00. Please note that payment of the registration fee does not automatically guarantee a place at Pre-school.

An Admissions Sub-Committee allocates places in the following order:

- current families staying on for another Academic Year
- special educational, social or family needs
- siblings of children who have or are still attending our Pre-school
- new families based on the date of registration, including payment of a registration fee.

The offer process starts during the Autumn Term and families will be contacted by our Administrator, via e-mail, when/if a place becomes available.

**Please remember to let us know about any changes in your contact details. If we are unable to get in touch with you, we will move on to the next family on our waiting list.**

Once offered a place at Pre-school, families are required to pay a Holding Fee of £150.00 which is refunded at the end of the child's time at Pre-school.

### **Starting Pre-school**

We encourage you to visit Pre-school with your child before they officially start. This enables children to feel comfortable at Pre-school before you need to leave them. We will discuss visits and settling in with parents during our Induction session, which takes place during the early part of the summer term.

### **Home Visits**

Home visits take place at the beginning of the Academic Year, or just before the child starts with us at other times of the year. The visit lasts for approximately 30 minutes. Your child's Key Person and one of our Managers will arrange the visit with you.

### **Safety**

The welfare and safety of the children during our sessions is paramount. As such, we have a comprehensive safety policy, to which we ask all parents and staff to adhere. We have a fence across our playground area and a gate across the car park which we ensure is closed once all the children have arrived. All external doors are locked whilst the children are onsite.

No child will leave the building at the end of any Pre-school session until his or her parent/carer has arrived. We ask you to provide us with a security password so that if someone else is collecting your child, the password will need to be given to a staff member. On these

occasions we require notification in advance, or on the day. If, in an emergency, you are unable to collect your child for any reason please contact Pre-school. Children will only be allowed home with an authorised adult. By law if your child has not been collected within 30 minutes of close of session, the Manager is required to contact Social Services.

### **The Committee**

Staff run the Pre-school with the support of a Management Committee drawn from and elected by the parents at the Annual General Meeting, which is held each Spring. Interest in becoming a member should be shown in advance of the AGM. At the AGM, financial accounts are presented and policies are reviewed. The Committee includes our Chair, Co-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Co-Treasurer, Personnel Officer, Fundraising Officer and Committee support. We also have "Friends of Committee" who assist the Committee with roles such as Website Co-ordinator. Monthly meetings are held to cover the day-to-day management of Pre-school, as well as planning for fund-raising and other special events. Fund raising is an essential role of the Committee and all members are encouraged to give their support.

If you enjoy being part of a small team and would like to take an active role in the running of Pre-school, please contact the Chair or Secretary for further details.

### **Sharing your talents!**

We no longer have the expectation that all Families help us at Pre-school on a regular basis. Instead we have introduced 'sharing talents'. We are very keen for parents and/or grandparents to come in from time to time to help with a cooking activity, to read a story, or

to share a special family celebration/event. We welcome suggestions from our families too of ways in which can link our activities and topics with you!

### Funding and fees

St Andrew's Pre-school suggests a small voluntary contribution per term to further enhance the Pre-school environment and equipment.

In line with other Pre-schools within our area, we operate additional fee-paying elements to our timetable.

Free Early Years Entitlement (FEYE) funding can be used for 2.5 hours per session. For example, if a child attends a morning session totalling 3 hours (9.15 am to 12.15 pm), 2.5 hours are paid for via the FEYE, and 0.5 hours **will be charged** to the parent/carer.

Your child's funding can be shared between St. Andrew's Pre-school and any other nursery setting that your child attends.

**\*\*St Andrew's Pre-school does not issue refunds if it is necessary to close due to circumstances which are beyond our control. For example, extreme weather conditions (snow), polling day, no water or no heating.\*\***

Please refer to our website for more details about our fees and for further information, please contact our Administrator.

Any other Pre-school costs, such as maintenance and replacement of toys and equipment are met through fund-raising activities.

Our weekly memos and Pre-school parent Facebook page give details of events. It is essential that parents support these activities and

they are always very enjoyable. It is an excellent way to get to know other families.

Pre-school is a charity and a non-profit making organisation.

### **St Andrew's Pre-school Policy statements**

Our comprehensive policies are available on our website. We believe that our policies reflect St Andrew's Pre-school's ethos.