

Harrow Way Pre-School Group



*Quality Care & Education
for your Children*



**HARROW WAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL ANDOVER SP10 3RH
01264 364900**

Welcome

We hope this booklet will provide some of the things you want to know about the Pre-School Group at Harrow Way Community School.

- Registration with OFSTED
- Policy Statements
- Our Aim and Objectives
- Learning through The Stepping Stones
- Practices and Routines
- How our Group is Run
- How and When you Pay
- The Staff
- Partnerships with Parents and the Community
- Health and Safety
- Complaints Procedure
- How to Register Your Child
- Questions to Ask

We undertake to offer you:

- a warm welcome
- care and consideration handling your enquiries
- information and guidance
- a commitment to evaluate

We adhere to a policy of courtesy, care, consideration and confidentiality.



HARROW WAY
PRE-SCHOOL

Registration with Ofsted

The Pre-School Group is registered with OFSTED to provide a high quality service for children.

- Monday to Friday inclusive except Tuesday afternoon
- In School term-time
- Sessional between 9.10am - 12.00pm and 12.30pm - 3.30pm
- Children join at different times throughout the year dependant on their age, stage and availability of places
- In Groups of up to 26 children
- We are registered to accept children with special needs. If you would like to discuss the Group's ability to meet your own child's special needs, please talk to the supervisor. Our full special needs policy is available upon request

OFSTED have a duty to inspect the quality of:

- Nursery education
and
- Childcare against the National Standards for under 8's daycare and childcare. The Inspection Report, which is made available to our parents, details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection.

The Pre School Group was last inspected by OFSTED in September 2006.

The result of the inspection was once again very very satisfying:

Quality and Standards of Care – result good

Quality and Standards of Nursery Education – result good



HARROW WAY
PRE-SCHOOL

Policy Statements



The Pre-School Group has the following written policies which are displayed on the noticeboard:

- Admissions
- Confidentiality
- Behaviour Management
- Child Protection
- Special Educational Needs/ Disability
- Equality and Diversity
- Equipment and Resources
- Food and Drink
- Health and Safety
- Physical Handling
- Non-collection of children
- Missing Child
- Settling in Pre-School
- Parental Involvement
- Staffing and Employment
- Staffing Protection
- Student Placements
- Complaint Procedure

These policies serve as a constant reminder of what we are aiming to do and demonstrate the high standards we aim to achieve. Comments and suggestions from parents are always welcome.

Our Aim and Objectives



Our Aim is:

- To enhance the development and education of children under statutory school age in a parent-involving, community-based group
- To work in partnership with parents to help their children to learn and develop
- To provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment
- To work within a framework which ensures equality of opportunity for all children and families.

Our Pre-School Group provides the opportunity for children to:

- learn through a carefully planned environment leading to approved learning outcomes
- share and enjoy the company of other children
- meet and trust new adults from outside the family
- be in a group which values everyone, where there is freedom of opportunity for personal growth and development regardless of gender, colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a travelling community or an asylum seeker
- develop at his/her own pace with the support of trained staff. Individual care and attention is made possible by a high ratio of adults to children
- grow in self confidence by learning to choose from a range of activities and materials; by trying new skills; by receiving praise for achievement
- take forward their learning and development by building upon what they know and what interests them
- gain independence by managing apart from parent/carers for a time

Learning through the Stepping Stones



The Early Years Foundation Stage is organised into six areas of learning:

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

Children start to learn about the world from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing varied and interesting activities.

At present we follow the guidance as set out in a document published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Department of Education and Skills, called the 'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage'. For each area of learning, the Guidance sets out 'stepping stones' which describe the stages through which children are likely to pass as they move toward achieving the Early Learning Goals. From September 2008 a new document called the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' will be introduced. This document will encompass the 'Birth to Three Matters' framework and the Curriculum Guidance.

The six areas help staff plan the learning environment, activities and experiences in a way that is appropriate for the age and stage of development for each child. This does not mean that all young children's learning is divided up into areas. One experience may provide a child with opportunities to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. For example, children building with blocks may co-operate in carrying the heavy and large blocks, negotiate the best place to put them, compare the weight and dimensions of different blocks and act out an imaginary scene. Therefore, they may be developing language, mathematical, physical, personal and social competencies through this one activity.

Approaches to teaching include recognition of the value of providing first hand experiences, of giving clear explanations, of praise, of appropriate adult intervention and of using play and talk as media for learning.



At Harrow Way children's progress and next steps are monitored using informal observation and attainment sheets and Records of Achievement. Records of Achievement are shared with your child's next setting or school enabling other practitioners/teachers to build upon your child's achievements.

What can we do as adults?

Children play instinctively. We believe the role of adults is to help children to harness their play experiences to acquire skills and understandings that will prepare them for school and for life.

Through play, in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practice and build ideas, concepts and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems
- Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

They need us to provide: love and comfort, things to play with, space, encouragement and praise, protection from danger, security to play freely, and the talk that goes with play.

Children enjoy playing and finding out what they can do. Adults should be careful not to show them exactly how to do everything or expect them to copy adult models. Experimenting is an important part of playing.

Adults are big and need to get down to child level. Talking to knees can't be very exciting!

Practices and Routines



Many of the Pre-School Group's practices are detailed in this booklet or are displayed on the notice board. A more comprehensive guide to our pre-school practice is available in our operational plan.

Please try not to arrive too early as the staff are busy preparing for the session and little ones find having to sit and wait quietly in the corridor very difficult. When you collect your child at the end of the session please be prompt. If you are delayed please let us know, or if you are unable to collect your child personally you must let us know who will at the start of the session. We will need the adult's full name, contact address, relationship to the family and their telephone number. If this is an adult who is not previously known to the group we will need written confirmation of these details. A 'password' system can also be put into place if you think it may be necessary. Staff will remind and reassure your child about the new arrangements. A member of staff is on duty at the outside door at the end of each session to ensure children leave with an authorised adult.

Group Routines

At Harrow Way, we believe that care and education are equally important. The routines and activities that make up our session are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that he/she is a valued member of the group
- ensure the health and 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 value learning

Snacks

Mid session we provide a balanced variety of healthy snacks and a drink. This is a social time when we sit and chat together. Do tell us about your child's special dietary needs and we will endeavour to ensure that these are met.

Reminder

May we remind you that old clothes are best for playing in, we do provide aprons for messy activities and we do have spare pants and sun hats should they be required. Sensible shoes, coats and sun cream are the parent/carer's responsibility and are necessary for our outdoor activities.

We advise parents and their children not to enter or leave the School through the entrance driveway. The approach to The Centre in which the Pre-School Group Room is situated requires children and parents to be careful. Please ask your child to look out for moving cars, not to climb on any railings and to only use the central pathway.

How our group is run



The Pre-School Group is an integral part of the Community School's Community Education Provision. The Management Committee, which includes the Headteacher, Community Education Manager, Group Supervisor, interested individuals and parents, receives regular reports and maintains records of income and expenditure. The management structure can be summarised as follows:

Liaison with parents and carers	Group Supervisor
Day to day supervision of staff	Group Supervisor
Day to day management of Supervisor.	Community Education Manager
Policy and financial issues.	Management Committee
Reviewing day to day practice.	Staff Meetings
Procedure for parents to air concerns.	Community Education Manager

The Group is affiliated to the Pre-school Learning Alliance, a national body with local branches which exists to help parents to understand and provide for the needs of their children. The PLA Contact Magazine and branch training events are posted at the noticeboard. Parents are welcome to attend both branch and regional PLA meetings including the Annual Conference. Ask the Group Supervisor for details.



How and when you pay



The Pre-School Group is self-financing.

Funding from Children's Services entitles your child in the term following their third birthday to have a free part-time place at Harrow Way Pre-School Group. Parents of children not eligible for funding will continue to pay the sessional fee. Both sources of income cover the cost of:

- staffing
- premises
- administration
- insurance
- equipment and materials
- snacks
- PLA membership
- staff development and training

Payment of the sessional fee can be made in advance, weekly, monthly or half-termly to the Group Supervisor. When paying by cheque, please make your cheque payable to: 'Harrow Way Centre' and include your cheque card number and expiry date on the back of the cheque. We are not able to accept payment by credit card. Families faced with financial hardship should consult the Supervisor about possible assistance to cover the fees in part. The sessional fee is reviewed annually by the Management Committee.

Absence

No fee is payable if your child is absent because of hospitalisation. Half fee is payable when your child is absent because of an infectious disease. The sessional fee is payable if your child is absent because of everyday illness eg coughs and colds, and holidays. If a child is unwell, staff will contact a parent or nominated carer to collect the child, so please make sure your information on your child's application form is kept up to date. Children suffering from tummy upsets are accepted back into the group 24 hours after their last bout of sickness and/or diarrhoea.

Please notify the Group Supervisor if your child will not be able to attend. This is especially important if your child is ill or has been sick. For example, it is important for us to notify parents of rubella cases (German Measles).

The Pre-School Group requires as much notice as is possible when your child is to leave the Group.

The Staff



Our Pre-School Group staff all possess recognised qualifications (displayed on the noticeboard). Either the:

- CACHE Diploma in Pre-School Practice or NVQ3
- CACHE Certificate in Pre-School Practice or NVQ2
- PLA Getting Started in a Pre-School (minimum qualification)

Staff take responsibility for identifying and, when appropriate, meeting their own training needs. All staff have a detailed job description which details the following expectations:

- a. To give priority for the health and welfare of the children.
- b. To be fully aware and respond appropriately to what's going on in the Group in terms of behaviour, isolation, distress, sickness, co-operation and achievement.
- c. To cope with any situation in a quiet and calm manner.
- d. To know all the children by their first names.
- e. To be involved with the children at all times without favouritism.
- f. To adhere to the policy of 'No Smoking' and no use of mobile phones for personal reasons during working hours.
- g. To attend approved training opportunities.
- h. To recognise the importance of confidentiality.
- i. To practice and develop ways of working in an equal opportunities dimension.
- j. To be involved in all areas of the Pre-School curriculum.
- k. To follow the policies and procedures of the Pre-School Group at all times.

Keyworkers

Children are allocated a keyworker, a named member of staff who is responsible for reporting at staff planning meetings any identified 'next steps' needed in order for your child to achieve and progress. If parents prefer, keyworkers are also available to discuss confidential concerns and other personal information.

Staffing Posts are advertised in the local newspaper. The interview process requires applicants to visit the Pre-School Group, meet staff and interact with the children prior to interview shortlisting. Appointments are made subject to satisfactory references, and Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks, the latter procedure to establish any criminal record to ensure the protection of the child.

The staff to child ratio is 1:4 for under threes and 1:8 for over threes. The ratio is improved when we include our approved:

- parent/carer helpers
- volunteer helpers
- student placements.

all of whom comply with County guidelines and regulations including CRB checks.

Partnerships – Parents & Community

For 40 years pre-schools have been the single largest founders of education and care for children under five and this has come about because of the commitment of parents.

Our Pre-School Group is committed to develop partnerships with parents and other agencies concerned with children.

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and staff work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development and training.



Support to Parents

We believe that parents are as much a part of the Pre-School Group as the children. We recognise the role that parents have already played in the early education of their child and this continued involvement is crucial to successful learning. Children learn better when parents are involved.

Harrow Way Pre-School operates an 'open door' policy and you are welcome to visit the Group both in the morning or afternoon sessions. The staff are available to discuss your child's general development, provide support and information or for an informal chat!

Perhaps you could become involved in fund raising events, supervising outdoor play, reading a story, helping with craft activities or by spending time just talking to the children. It would all be much appreciated as we value your ideas and help.

Parents evenings and open days are also organised during the year. This is an ideal opportunity for parents to see some of the activities on offer, look through our photograph album, peruse the operational plan, read your child's written records and talk to staff about your child's progress and achievements. However, please be assured if we have any concerns with regard to your child's needs, progress and/or development we would let you know.

Please read the Group's twice yearly newsletter and the notices on the notice board for other up-to-date information including dates of holidays.

The Group also needs parents who are willing to become committee members and who could attend three or four evening meetings during the year. Please think about volunteering, we're a friendly bunch and you need no previous knowledge or qualifications, just an interest in your child's pre-school care. Have a chat to the Supervisor if you think you may be able to help out.



Links with the Community

There is good liaison with other agencies and carers, such as health visitors and childminders, and these contacts are used in planning opportunities for learning for individual children. Successful links with the previous and next stage of education are maintained.

Links are wide and varied and include:

- Children's Services
- Local Infant Schools
- Pre-school Learning Alliance
(Andover & District Branch)
- Local Colleges and Schools (student placement)
- Health Visitor
- Andover Family Learning
- Acorns Special Needs Group
- Area Special Needs Co-ordinator
- Trident (work experience)
- Child Protection Officer
- Home Portage
- NSPCC



Health & Safety

The health and safety of a child is of paramount importance to us all.

Group Responsibility

'Every child has the right to be protected and it is everyone's responsibility to protect children'.

Your child will be spending time at a registered pre-school group who have a duty and responsibility under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts to report any concerns regarding your child to the Children's Services Department, who have procedures to follow. The Group is obliged to disclose any confidential information which is relevant to the safety of the child to the Children's Services Department who will in turn make confidential enquiries which they deem necessary from other agencies.

Parental Responsibility

Please remember that Parent and Carers are fully responsible for the safety of their children as they arrive and leave The Centre and the School Campus. We advise parents and their children not to enter or leave the School through the entrance driveway. The approach to The Centre in which the Pre-School Group Room is situated requires children and parents to be careful. Please ask your child to look out for moving cars, not to climb on any railings or walls and to only use the central pathway.

Cars

Parent and Carers of children attending the Pre-School Group are **NOT** allowed to drive their cars round to The Centre (an exemption is made for disabled drivers). A place for your child at the Group is conditional on this policy being adhered to. All drivers are asked to park their cars in the main playground, a distance of 100 yds to The Centre (please do not walk through the school buildings). Drivers of cars must keep to the 5 mph speed limit and must give way to children, students and adult pedestrians.

Visitors

Visitors and Parents/Carers when visiting are asked to report to Community Reception on arrival and sign the Group's Visitors Book.



Premises and campus

We aim to provide an environment that is welcoming, warm, bright, well decorated, safe, clean, litter free, organised and well-maintained. The condition of buildings and grounds are regularly checked for defect. Maintenance and repairs are given priority. Please draw to our attention any defects which might constitute a hazard -whether dangerous, damaged or faulty.

Equipment

The physical environment is organised with due regard to health and safety. The pre-school group room is well furnished and well equipped. Furnishings and equipment are in good condition and are regularly checked for defects.

First aid

Staff have undertaken first aid training in recent years and are familiar with first aid arrangements.

Outdoor play

When suitable, children have the opportunity to play in fresh air in a designated outside play area. The outdoor spaces are securely fenced, staff ratios are maintained and children wear hats when the sun is hot.

Fire

All pre-school group staff know what to do in case of fire. Procedures are practised in conjunction with teaching staff and students.

No smoking

Smoking is not allowed in The Centre nor in front of any children or in any other school building

No dogs

For the safety of our children, parents and carers are not permitted to bring dogs onto the school campus.



Offsite activity procedures

The Pre-School Group Supervisor is expected to follow the Group's procedures for offsite activities when trips and outings are organised. The procedures include the signing of parental consent forms, a high adult to child ratio, availability of children's application forms, a first aid kit and a mobile phone. A copy of all this information is left with a base contact.

Insurance

Hampshire County Council's public liability policy covers aspects of legal liability for all community school users including the Pre-School Group. There is no personal accident cover for our children or for their personal property. The school governing body does not accept responsibility for any loss of, or damage to, personal property brought into the school buildings and grounds.

Complaints procedure

As a member of the pre-school learning alliance we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play. We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.



Making concerns known

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the Pre-School Group and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the Group's provision should first of all talk over any worries and anxieties with the Group Supervisor. If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within a couple of weeks or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the Group Supervisor and the chair of the management committee. Both parents and the Group Supervisor should have a friend or partner present if required and an agreed written record of the discussion should be made.

Prior complaints documents are confidential and as such are held in the community education office. A summary of our complaints procedure is available separately should you wish access to it. If an internal discussion does not have a satisfactory outcome and you wish to make a complaint directly to OFSTED the address is:

Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED),
Southern Region,
Freshford House,
Redcliffe Way,
Bristol.

Telephone: Helpline – 0845 6404040



How to register your child

STEP ONE

Parents are invited to visit the group between 9.45 am and 11.30 am and 1.00 pm and 3.00 pm to observe the group in action (the facilities, activities and atmosphere) and to have a personal chat with the Group Supervisor. She will be able to answer your questions and will provide information about other town playgroups and local infant schools in the catchment area.

The list of questions on the back page will give you some idea of the things parents are concerned about.

STEP TWO

You will receive a welcome letter offering a place to your child. If a place is not immediately available we can put your child on the waiting list. An eventual place or choice of sessions cannot be guaranteed, but we do our very best.

If you are not able to accept a place or no longer wish your child's name to remain on the waiting list please let the Group Supervisor know as soon as possible so other children on the waiting list can benefit.

STEP THREE

Please come and visit the Group with your child during the term before your child is due to start. This is an opportunity to discuss the sessions you would prefer, update your child's application form and contribute relevant information to your child's 'settling in' plan.

The Group Supervisor will arrange a time for you to have induction so you will be familiarised with all aspects of the Pre-School Group

Joining a Pre-School Group is a very big step for a small child. Settling in will go more smoothly if your child feels comfortable with the staff and the rooms, knows where the toilet is and is familiar with our daily routine and the activities likely to be offered. We all wish to make the transition into pre-school as painless as is possible for your child. It has a higher chance of being so if we keep talking to each other, sharing our concerns and are flexible in our strategies for this interim period. Our policy on 'settling in' is displayed on the notice board and in our operational plan.



Questions to ask

At what age will you take my child?
Have you a waiting list?
When can we start?
Can I stay?
How many children are there in a group?

Have the staff been trained?
Do any other people help in the Pre-School Group?
What do the children call the staff?

Do you work to a programme?
Do the children sit down together to do activities?
What is the toilet procedure?
Do you mind if she brings things from home?
Should clothing be named?
How do I know my child is progressing?

Do I still pay if my child is ill or has a pre-school visit?
When do we pay?
How much is the sessional fee?
Can you tell me if my 3-year old will have a free place?

Do you let parents know of any infectious diseases?
What happens if my child has an accident?
Do all adults know what to do in case of fire?
Is the building secure for my child?

Can my child bring some juice, sweets or crisps?
Do the children have anything to eat?

Can I drop in when I'm passing?
Can I bring the baby?

Are there any rules?
What happens if my child is naughty?
How do staff cope with temper tantrums?
How do staff comfort an upset child?
How are children praised or rewarded?

