

REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION

The Playgroup is registered with Early Years Directorate of Ofsted and is inspected by them. We are required to comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, which sets out learning and development requirements that registered providers must implement in order to assist children towards progress in the Early Learning Goals. It is designed to meet the individual needs of all children.

Our policies and procedures (Safeguarding Children, Equality of Opportunity, Promoting Health and Hygiene, Health and Safety, Employment etc) are displayed on the Playgroup notice-board in the Village Hall, together with our registration and insurance documents and fire evacuation procedure.

Any complaints, queries or need for additional information may be addressed to

The Early Years Directorate of Ofsted
Field House
Station Approach
Harlow
CM20 2FS.
Tel 0845 6014772

There are complaints procedure forms on the notice board which you can take.



Welcome to Little Hallingbury Playgroup

Little Hallingbury Playgroup is held in the Village Hall, Lower Road, Little Hallingbury, CM22 7RD. The group is owned and managed by Ann Luke and is registered with the Early Years Directorate of Ofsted to accommodate 30 children from 2 to 5 years. As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance we have full insurance cover for a playgroup.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and the principles, which guide the work of the early years staff and are grouped into 4 themes.

- A Unique Child—every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships—children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and a keyworker.
- Enabling Environments—the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning.
- Learning and Developments—children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and interconnected.



Our Telephone number is 01279 726578 during Playgroup hours.

We also have;

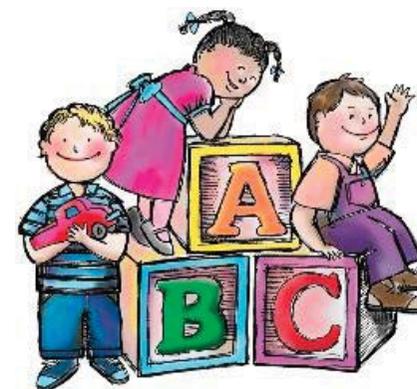
- ❖ The transition book, containing pictures of various aspects of the school and school life, including relevant staff members, classroom, playground, school hall etc.
- ❖ One member of staff is also a member of the school staff.
- ❖ The reception class from the school attends the Playgroup Christmas Nativity.

The school, being a Church of England Voluntary Aided School has close links with the local church it is therefore appropriate that the children become acquainted with this aspect of school life. The playgroup has welcomed the opportunity given by the Rector for children and parents to attend a short service, suitable for pre-school children, each half term. This is also a valuable part of extending the curriculum.

Another community link is with the Police Community Support Officer who visits the Playgroup regularly.

We have established links with Spangles Children’s Centre and the outreach worker attends some sessions and we signpost to their services.

We take part in educational visits to the Hatfield Forest termly where we look for, ‘Signs of Spring’, ‘Signs of Autumn’, ‘Mini-beasts’ etc.



WHAT TO WEAR

In order that your child feels free to explore and experiment with all kinds of materials it is best to send them dressed in clothes which are easily washable or not too new. Also in the summer they will require a sunhat and to have had sun cream applied. It is good for children to practice the skills that make them independent so simple clothing which they can manage themselves will enable them to go to the toilet and put on and take off outdoor clothes without being dependent on other people's help.



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We recognise that parents are the first and most important educators of their children. Therefore we regard it as essential to build a firm partnership between parents and the staff of the playgroup as a vital component to creating an atmosphere of mutual respect. Parents are welcome to stay to settle them into the group, to speak to the staff if they have any concerns about their child, to share any information about their child's development with their keyworker or any staff member.

We do ask parents to keep their child at home if they are unwell and to ring us to let us know. If a child has been sick during the night we would ask that you do not bring them to playgroup until 24 hours after the event.

If it is necessary for us to administer any medication to your child we will require you to sign the medication book.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

The majority of our children will, at the appropriate age, go to Little Hallingbury Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. We aim to help all our children make the transition between Playgroup and School as smooth as possible; therefore we maintain strong links with the school to which most of them will proceed. Foremost among these links are; the reception class teacher

- ❖ She is the teacher mentor for the playgroup. The leader and some of the staff liaise with her on a regular basis.
- ❖ She visits Playgroup to meet the children who are moving into her reception class so they are familiar with her when they have their taster visits into school.



AIMS OF OUR PLAYGROUP

Starting playgroup is an exciting and challenging step for every young child. It is an important time for children to become a little more independent, to make new friends, have fun and to learn the value of sharing and co-operating with others.

The aim of our group is to provide a safe, caring, welcoming and happy environment where children can advance their social and intellectual skills and develop their physical dexterity through play and the use of equipment and activities provided. We aim to enhance their development and education through a "learning through play" philosophy. We provide a wide range of activities as well as free play throughout the session. We welcome all children irrespective of ethnicity, culture, or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities and give them the opportunity to experience all the fun and learning we offer at Playgroup. We would prefer children to be toilet trained but this is not an issue and all staff are happy to change nappies. We offer your child;

- ❖ A key person who has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building a relationship with you the parents; talking to you and making sure the needs of your child are met; keeping and sharing with you records of their progress and development.
- ❖ The opportunity for social interaction with other children and adults.
- ❖ A balanced and planned curriculum leading to the approved Learning Goals in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- ❖ The opportunity to learn independent self-help skills.
- ❖ We have an open door policy where parents can come to the group at any time to discuss any concerns about their child or simply to see what we do.

SESSIONS AND FEES

We operate Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 12:15 pm during term time only. Our fees for the younger children are £9.50 per session and can be paid weekly, half-termly or termly. Full fees are payable if your child is absent or on holiday. Under the Nursery Education Act 3 and 4 year olds qualify for funding.

Your child is eligible for funding the term following their third birthday. If your child is 3 years before

- December 31st funding will be from January
- March 31st funding will be from April
- August 31st funding will be from September

In order to qualify for this funding the government insists we operate for 38 weeks of the year and are inspected by Ofsted. To comply with Ofsted we offer a balanced, planned curriculum and work towards the Early Learning Goals in the six area of learning, which are;

- ❖ Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- ❖ Communication, Language and Literacy
- ❖ Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- ❖ Physical Development
- ❖ Creative Development
- ❖ Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

OUR STAFF

We are proud of our highly experienced staff. We have a qualified nursery nurse with over 45 years experience as manager, a deputy and seven other staff with an NVQ level 3 or equivalent qualification in childcare and education and 2 other staff members. All the staff have a rich understanding of children and a good knowledge of Early Years Education and Curriculum. As a group we are totally committed to training, staff have attended courses offered by the Essex Schools, Children and Families Directorate. These cover Child Protection, Safeguarding, Behaviour Management, Special Educational Needs, Equal Opportunities, and Paediatric First Aid etc. All members of staff have been CRB checked.

Lisa is our Special Educational Needs Coordinator
Debbie is our Equality Named Coordinator
Julie and Abbie are our Safeguarding Coordinators
Dorinda is our Health and Safety and Risk Assessment Coordinator

Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

A safe and stimulating environment allows children to explore and experiment with a range of natural and manufactured materials. They learn to observe the features of objects and substances, recognize differences, patterns and similarities, and to share and record their findings. Children are assisted in exploring and understanding their environment, both within the group and also in the wider community. A range of safe and well-maintained equipment enables children to extend their technological understanding, using simple tools and techniques as appropriate to achieve their intentions to solve problems.

Physical Development

A range of equipment and opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, allows children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their own bodily skills. A very high level of adult supervision enables children safely to create and meet physical challenges, developing increasing skill and control in moving, climbing and balancing. At the same time, children are supported in the development of fine motor skills required to use tools, including pens and pencils, and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision.

Creative Development

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings and to construct their individual response to experience in two and three dimensions. Art equipment, including paint, glue, crayons and pencils as well as natural and discarded resources, provides for open-ended exploration of colour, shape and texture and the development of skills in painting, drawing and collage. Children join in with and respond to music and stories and there are many opportunities for imaginative role-play, both individually and as part of the group.



CURRICULUM

By means of developmentally appropriate activities and a high level of adult input we offer a curriculum which leads to the Nationally Approved Early Learning Goals in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Communication, Language and Literacy

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening, and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes. Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purpose of writing and, when they are ready, to use drawn and written symbols for themselves. A well-stocked book corner and additional library books give children the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, learn how to handle them and become aware of their uses.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development



Within a nurturing environment children are individually supported in developing confidence, autonomy and self-respect. They are encouraged to work and concentrate independently and also to take part in the life of the group, sharing and co-operating with other children and adults. Through activities, conversation and practical example, they learn

acceptable ways to express their own feelings and to have respect for the feelings of others. All children are given the opportunity, as appropriate, to take responsibility for themselves and also for the group, its members and its property.

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

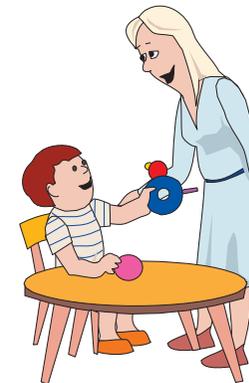
By means of adult-supported practical experience, children become familiar with the sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities, which form the basis for early mathematics. As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems, children are assisted to learn to use the vocabulary of mathematics, identifying objects by shape, position, size, volume and number. Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of number sequences and, when they are ready, to use simple mathematical operations such as adding.

SETTLING YOUR CHILD INTO PLAYGROUP

We want your child to feel safe and happy while they are away from you. Our settling in procedures aim to help each child become familiar with the playgroup and to grow in confidence. In the term before your child starts we like you and your child to visit for 4 x 1 hour sessions, arranged by the leader. These sessions give your child the opportunity to meet staff and children and allows us to talk together about the session, the curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage in learning and provides valuable preparation for the transition ahead.

When your child starts playgroup it may be strange to begin with and they may feel anxious and upset. Once you have settled them at an activity with a member of staff say goodbye, reassuring them that you will return and then leave. We will always telephone you if there is a problem; you are also welcome to ring if you are concerned when you return home.

Please be on time to collect your child at the end of the session and please inform a member of staff if your child is to be collected by someone other than yourself.



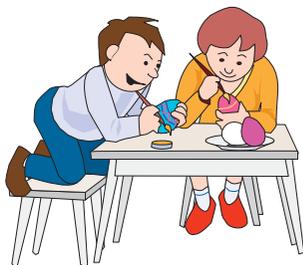
DAILY ROUTINE

9:00 am Doors opened and children and parents are welcomed. The children are encouraged to find their own name from the board and place it in the box provided. Parents then have the opportunity of informal discussion and can exchange information with staff members.

9:15 am We have a whole group activity to talk about the day of the week and the month, look and talk about the weather, learn the chosen letter, letter sound and number for the week, share news and birthdays.

9:30 – 11:50 am Free play. There is a variety of equipment for the children to use during this time e.g. home corner, book corner, dressing up box, train set, puzzles, pencils and crayons, play dough, Magnetico, small world equipment, cars and construction. There are opportunities for sand and water play, painting and craft activities. Also during this time the children are encouraged to participate in the planned theme activity and taken in small groups for more structured activities, although this is still presented as “learning through play”. These include Numeracy, Literacy, Music, Technology, Stories, and Physical Activity, which is encouraged to take place out of doors. The older children also prepare for school learning simple phonics.

From 10:00 am we have a rolling snack time with six to eight children at the table at any one time. This gives children the opportunity to choose when they have their snack enabling this to be a natural break in their activities and enhances social interaction in small groups with an adult. The snack we offer is milk or water to drink with fruit or vegetables, cheese and crackers, sandwiches or toast. Children are encouraged to pour their own drinks and good table manners are promoted.



11:50 – 12:00 noon Begin to tidy toys.

12:00 – 12:15 pm. The session closes with Circle Time when we sing, listen to music, have group story time or role-play.

Children are encouraged to take part in all the activities, however if your child does not have an end product to show you please do not think they have done nothing. It may be they were totally involved in free play activities that can provide valuable learning and social opportunities and they, or we were unwilling to interrupt these. An example of this would be when a child may be doing some valuable role play in one of the free play corners and to interrupt them would prove invaluable when they are learning excellent social skills.

Each week our Music Teacher comes in to provide a wonderful session of music, percussion and singing.



RECORD KEEPING

Your child's keyworker records your child's progress by making observations, taking photographs and putting samples of their work in a 'Learning Journey' scrapbook and highlighting their achievements on the Development Matters assessment sheets, which cover the six areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This scrapbook is for you, as parents, your child and the keyworker to share on a regular basis and we value your contribution about any milestones your child achieves at home and maybe some photographs of family occasions and celebrations.