

**Welcome** to St Mary’s Pre-school Shortlands, we are open for up to 38 weeks a year from 9.15am - 12.15pm daily.

We are registered with the London Borough of Bromley and are inspected by Ofsted. We are members of the Early Years Alliance.

You may contact us to place your child’s name on our waiting list and we will inform you by email when a place becomes available. If we are oversubscribed, we follow our admissions policy to ensure that we allocate places fairly. We take siblings and proximity into account when offering places. Please note that as the majority of children leave in July to go to primary schools, the majority of our new children start in the autumn term.

You are very welcome to come and visit our setting at a time that is mutually convenient. This is a fantastic opportunity to bring your child with you so that you can see them in the pre-school environment. The visit lasts approximately 15 minutes. During the term before your child starts with us, you and your child will be invited in to meet the staff and see the pre-school in action. This is an ideal time to talk about any worries or concerns you may have and also to let us have any information which you think may be vital or useful for us to know to enable us to prepare for your child starting.

**Aims & Objectives**

We aim to provide a warm, safe, stimulating and welcoming environment for your child to learn and enhance their development.

We are a fun-filled pre-school that looks forward to the challenge of preparing children, during their very important early years, for their future both in schools and in their lives ahead.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and the children learn through play.

We are committed to meeting the needs of every child, and to ensuring that they have every chance to develop to their full potential through play and a structured programme, no matter what age, class, race, ability, ethnic origin, gender, family circumstances, linguistic background, religion or belief. This applies throughout all pre-school policies, curriculum plans and procedures.

Our pre-school is inclusive of all families and is set in a Church hall. We celebrate Christian festivals as well as festivals celebrated in other cultures and religions including Diwali, Chinese New Year & Thanksgiving. We engage the children in the wider community through activities such as Autumn Walks, singing for the Elderly community, participating in some church services and teaching them about caring for their community.

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During the time that the children are with the pre-school we aim to prepare them for school and the outside world through play.

The children will learn the following social skills:

* Learning to share and take turns
* Learning good manners
* Making friends and respecting others
* Understanding that we are all of equal value
* Learning to be truthful
* Learning to make choices and decisions
* Learning to expand their language and their imagination

**Staff**

Pre-school Leader - Christine Hall

Deputy Leader & SENCO – Clare Stock

We have a total staff of seven; at each session there will be five staff on duty. All members of staff are qualified. We send our staff on as many revision and new courses as can be managed and if possible we fund unqualified staff to train. All the staff have undertaken a 12 hour Paediatric First Aid training course and are DBS checked.

We are proud of our recently achieved First Aid accreditation – Millie’s Mark.



We have also achieved a Gold award in Healthy Early Years London

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We are Ofsted registered and achieved Good at our last inspection in 2018



**Early Years Foundation Stage**

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) by working on the 7 areas of learning and development.

For children under 3 we concentrate on developing the **3 prime areas**.

* Personal, Social and Emotional Development
* Communication & Language
* Physical Development.

As children grow the prime areas help them to develop skills in the **4 specific areas.**

* Literacy
* Mathematics
* Understanding the World
* Expressive Arts & Design

We observe how the children are progressing within these areas and set them ‘next steps’. A member of staff is allocated to each child (keyperson). Each child is planned for individually.

We use a variety of topics to cover the 7 areas. Every term we inform parents of the topic that will be covered each week so that, if the children want to bring something from home that is relevant to the topic, they are welcome to do so. These items will be kept safely on the topic table until they are taken home. The children show what they have brought in at ‘show and tell’. Sometimes the children choose what toys we get out.

Having a topic each week enables us to cover a wide range of subjects and to teach the children a great deal. It allows us to pass on all sorts of important ideas to children in a fun way. The music and the planning of each session are similarly worked around each week’s topic.

Through the EYFS children learn by playing, exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outdoors.

**Resources**

We have a large variety of resources for your child to use. These include:

* A wide range of craft activities that include gluing, cutting, constructing, painting & sticking
* Tactile activities such as water, playdough, cornflour, rainbow rice, magic snow, ice blocks, pasta, playfoam, rubber and kinetic sand.
* Role play area such as the home corner, supermarket, healthy eating café, hospital, construction site and airport, space station & garden centre.
* Reading corner which has a wide variety of books with different textures, sound books, musical books & books at varying reading levels.
* Writing table and maths table with a variety of tools & resources.
* Climbing frame and physical equipment.
* Construction toys.
* Table top activities such as magnetic fishing, puppet theatre and puzzles, Paw Patrol toys, Peppa Pig World, Pirate ships and Noah’s Ark.
* Music and singing activities.
* Computer, tablets, Beebots and remote control cars
* various outside toys such as trikes, scooters, football goals, basketball net, a bubble machine, a snow machine and a play house.

**How a pre-school session runs**

When the children arrive, they find their name cards and then have a short time of free-play. We then have a ‘register’ time when we talk about the day, the weather and what we are going to be doing that day. All children are given a chance to be Helper of the day and help with jobs such as the calendar and the timeline throughout the session. We then continue with free-play during which time the ‘snack-bar’ is open. Parents help to run the ‘snack-bar’ and we offer milk, water and a variety of fruit.

During freeplay the staff may be observing the children or doing activities with them. Towards the end of freeplay we have a toilet time, they may go at other times but have to ask a member of staff to accompany them.

We then have tidy-up time and the children help to put away the toys into boxes. The next activity is show and tell, the children can show items they have brought in related to our weekly topic and then it is singing time. This is followed by a range of activities including games with hoops, balls, bean bags, a circuit, musical movement, team games, musical chairs, dancing, acting out nursery rhymes or maybe dominoes, a sounds game, attention and listening games or playing with the parachute.

We end with a story read in 3 groups.

Not every session will run like this. We offer variety and include visits to the church, trips to various places in the local community, we have visitors come in to see us and play musical instruments and introduce us to different animals. The children participate in concerts & a Nativity at Christmas.

There is an enclosed patio area attached to the hall which we use every day. It is rich in vocabulary, is bright and we provide a range of activities for the children to participate in, including football, basketball, balancing activities, trikes, we can practise road safety outside with our traffic lights and zebra crossing. We play with bubbles and snow and arrange scientific experiments for the children to watch.

When the weather is fine and warm, we are able to go outside to the grassed area at the side of the hall; there we have a small garden where we grow things with the help of the children. The children are always supervised outside and the area is fenced off from the road and pavements. We use this area for Forest play and engage the children in interactive stories such as ‘Going on a Bear Hunt’ & ‘The Gruffalo’.

Each day we put a notice on the door informing you of the main activities that we have done during that session - in case you do not get told!

**Outings**

We organise several outings while your child is with us. We have an annual trip to Crystal Palace Park to see the dinosaurs and the children’s farm and we have a train trip to Cator Park. We also aim to have a spring and an autumn walk.

**Settling In**

We like to ensure that all children are happy & settled at preschool and have staff that are experienced and trained in using a variety of strategies to help your child to feel safe and secure. Each child is treated individually when settling in at pre-school. Please come and discuss this with a member of the staff if you think there will be a problem. We will phone you during your child’s first session to let you know how your child is getting on.

**Strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour**

If a child is hurt or upset by another child we listen to both sides of the story and if one child is considered to have behaved inappropriately, he/she is asked to say sorry. If a child continues to display challenging behaviour, staff will monitor the situation and work in partnership with you to encourage positive behaviour. We understand that challenging behaviour can sometimes be a symptom or sign of underlying causes and if we have a concern, we will discuss this with you.

**Parental participation**

As parents/carers you are invited to join us at the end of term concerts. We have a notice board by the main entrance (which we ask you to check regularly) to tell you what is going on at the pre-school, we also send out a termly Newsletter which has information about what we have planned for the term. Our termly planning is displayed for all to see. We are always happy to hear your valuable comments and suggestions. We ask for volunteers to help with the snack-bar, for visits out, and for any activities that needs extra help. We celebrate cultural festivals and welcome parents to come in to help with this.

**Moving on**

We have good links with all the local primary schools. Reception teachers visit us, usually just before children are about to move on to primary schools and the pre-school leader and deputy visit local schools.

**Mobile phones**

In the interests of the children’s safety our pre-school is a **‘mobile-free zone’**. We would ask you to keep your mobile phones in your bags or pockets while you are in the pre-school building