



Prospectus

Dear Parents,

At Vicarage Lodge we want your child to feel happy and relaxed and eager to come to playgroup. We do hope that you find this prospectus helpful and informative.

You are welcome to come and visit and see what we offer.

We look forward to meeting you soon.



Vicarage Lodge Preschool - Inspiring Curiosity

MISSION STATEMENT

Within the group all children are supported in developing their potential, at their own pace, by means of appropriate play, activities and a high level of adult input, within a safe, secure, stimulating environment.

We are able to offer a spacious, child friendly, well-resourced indoor and outdoor play area.

We offer your child a personal key worker who ensures they make satisfying progress within the E.Y.F.S (Early Years Foundation Stage)

Self-motivation is encouraged, as are independence and self-discipline, learning through example set by peers and adults.

We believe strongly in working in partnership with parents to help children learn and develop.



HISTORY

The first Playgroup in the Runcorn area was formed in 1962 in a private house. Due to the popularity and numbers in the group, they were forced to find larger premises and the Playgroup moved to St Johns Church Hall in Victoria Road. After further growth a second Playgroup was formed which took residence in Vicarage Lodge in 1967. The Playgroup rented the Lodge from the Church of England up until 1989.

During 1989, the Playgroup was threatened with closure due to the development of the surrounding area. To prevent this closure, and the demolition of the building, the Playgroup would have to become responsible for the building, which at the time was in a serious state of disrepair.

For this to become possible the playgroup became a community association by adopting the PPA constitution and also by registering with the Charity Commission. Six trustees

were appointed, these represented appropriate sectors of the local community and an agreement on a 99 year lease was entered into.

The Playgroup now has a management committee consisting of elected parents and supplemented by interested members of the community, who deal with all aspects of the building.

The committee had a number of tasks to carry out, the major one being to secure finance for a program of major refurbishment which began with the erection of a new toilet block, cloakroom, porch/storeroom, roof, floor and lastly a new kitchen and store area. In 2015, thanks to the fundraising efforts of families and friends of Vicarage Lodge and funding from Awards For All and Halton Borough Council the preschool was able to complete the renewal of the whole roof.

The main building is a large room where all play activities are carried out. It is a bright, airy room with plenty of children's work displayed.

We have a large outside play area.

STAFFING

A high adult: child ratio is essential in providing good quality pre-school care.

Under 3's, 1:4 ratio

Under 5's, 1:8 ratio

We are licensed for up to 28 children at each session.

Weekly staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress.

Manager

Rachel Yensen

Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator

Danielle Robinson

Preschool Assistants

All staff are given opportunities and encouraged to undertake training on a regular basis.

All staff have either gained a national Vocational Qualification in "The Education of the Pre-School Child" or are working towards it. All members of staff are qualified First Aiders.

Employment

Any applications for positions within our group are considered and appointed on the basis of their ability irrespective of race, colour, religion or disability.

Fees

Fees are payable at the beginning of each week/month by cash, cheque or bank transfer. You will find a current fees list in your welcome pack, or alternatively contact the preschool.

Nursery Grants

We are registered to receive the Early Years Education grant. This provides funding for every 3 and 4 year old. All children will be eligible for funding at the start of the term after their third birthday.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

1. Staff are aware that any information given to them by Parents is treated in the STRICTEST CONFIDENCE.
2. A room is available if a parent wishes to discuss anything in confidence.
3. Observations and Children's Files and Records are only available to Staff and Parents / Carers.
4. **CHILD PROTECTION**
We would reassure all concerned that if we were worried in any way, we would take the necessary action and act in a Confidential Manner and follow our policy and procedure.
5. **COMPLAINTS**

We believe that it is in the best interest of Pre-School and Parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way that respects Confidentiality.

6. STAFF/COMMITTEE/VOLUNTEERS

Any information given to the Supervisor/Chairperson will be dealt with in the strictest confidence. Equally, the same applies to staff.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

We admit children into Preschool from 2 years and 9 months, giving priority to:-

- 1) Waiting List
- 2) Siblings
- 3) Catchment Area

We welcome all children and families irrespective of race, colour, religion and disability.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

At Vicarage Lodge we believe children grow and learn in an environment where their rights are respected and they are taught to respect the rights of others. We also believe children play and learn better when they understand what is expected of them.

At Vicarage Lodge we aim to provide an environment which is calm and positive, promoting acceptable behaviour so raising self-esteem and confidence in children.

Staff provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children and adults with care, consideration and respect.

To all aspects of behaviour, good or bad we display a positive, calm, firm but fair attitude at all times. Positive behaviour is praised and comments are made on the behaviour not the child.

When handling conflict between children, positive strategies are used appropriate for that individual child. Discipline will be dealt with in a way that does not humiliate the child or put their health and safety at risk. Physical restraint is only used when the health and safety of the child or others is put at risk. (See restraining guidelines)

Staff work in partnership with parents to inform them about their child's behaviour. This is done through our key worker system to work together with parents to support the child and if needed an Individual Behaviour Plan will be set up. Parents can also take their concerns to the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) or BECO (Behaviour Coordinator). Parents will be informed, confidentially, at the end of a session with regards any negative behaviour.

Staff are aware that cultural difference may mean that children interact or behave differently in some circumstances. This will require sensitivity and understanding. Incidents of racial abuse will be reported to EYDCP at Halton Borough Council who is responsible to monitor the incident.

Staff work together using the same strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour. Training is made available to staff to increase knowledge and understanding. The BECO will liaise

with outside agencies and parents where necessary, confidentiality remaining paramount.

Staff and volunteers understand Vicarage Lodge's rules on positive behaviour, as consistency is important.

Bullying, any behaviour which negatively effects someone else either verbal, physical or indirectly will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrence of bullying and to deal with any incidences quickly and effectively. Parents will be informed about such behaviour and staff will work together to overcome any difficulties.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We strive to welcome parents into our Preschool. The management committee consists of elected parents and members of the local community who can serve for a maximum of 10 years. The AGM takes place during the Autumn Term. The time, place and conduct of meetings will ensure that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved in the running of our Pre-School group.

We have a parents' rota and would encourage parents, grandparents and carers to take part and work in the group with the children.

We strive to ensure that all parents have opportunities to contribute from their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the group.

Parents are welcomed to assist with fund-raising. Fund-raising is a way in which finances for the upkeep and maintenance can continue. In the past, these have included bingo, Summer Fayre, raffles, Christmas Fayre, book sales.....new ideas are always welcome.

STUDENT PLACEMENT

We recognise that the quality and variety of our work in Preschool makes it an ideal place for students on placements. Colleges and local schools use Vicarage Lodge to offer placements for students during vocational training.

SETTLING IN

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and unhappy. Our settling in procedures aim to help children to feel comfortable, to benefit from what Playgroup has to offer, and to be confident that their parents will return at the end of the session.

In order to accomplish this we will :-

- Invite parents/carers to visit Preschool with their children during the weeks before admission is planned. This enables children to get to know the staff and the layout of the building. It also gives the staff an idea of the children's capabilities.
- Encourage parents, where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.
- Reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a long time to settle into Playgroup.

- Parents will be asked for background information of their child, enabling Staff to get to know them.
- Each child will be given a keyworker throughout their stay at playgroup.

WHAT TO WEAR

In order to feel free to explore and experiment with all kinds of materials, including messy ones, it is best to send children dressed in clothes which are easily washable or not too new. It would also be appreciated if clothes are marked with the child's name.

Shoes should be suitable for safe play when on the climbing frame. We can provide spare clothes on loan if there is an accident. Pre-School t-shirts are available for purchase.

It is good for children to practise the skills that will make them independent. Simple clothing which they can handle themselves will enable them to go to the toilet when they want to and put on and take off their outdoor clothes without being too dependent on other people's help.



SAFETY PRACTICE

The safety of the young children is of paramount importance.

An emergency number where either you or a reliable person can be contacted will be asked for, together with the name of your GP and Health Visitor.

Children will leave the group only with authorised adults. All adults are aware of the systems in operation for children's arrivals and departures and an adult will be at the door during these periods.

A register of both adults and children is completed as people arrive and leave so that a complete record of all those present is available in an emergency

There are safety locks on the gates in the outside play area and all handles on other doors are out of reach of children.

There are toilets and children's steps and sinks with thermostatically controlled water.

Adults supervise all children at all times. A correctly stocked first aid box is available at all times.

An accident book is always available for the reporting of any accident/incident. Staff and parent/carer sign this. Should an accident occur and a child requires special medical care whilst under our supervision, relevant action will be taken.

Children are excluded from the storeroom where cleaning fluids are kept, where chairs are stacked and where anything not generally suitable for children is kept.

The building is a designated No Smoking Area. The staff are responsible for holding fire drills on a monthly basis, the procedure being:

1. Staff and helpers to gather all the children together and evacuate them from the building in an orderly and calm manner.
2. Person in charge will do a sweeping check of all rooms and collect register, signing in books, phone and grab and go bag
3. The person in charge will unlock the garden gate using keys from the grab and go bag. If the gate cannot be unlocked the garden fire exit will be used.
4. Assembly point for garden fire exit is the Vicarage driveway. The assembly point for the main porch fire exit is the Cenotaph.
5. All adults and children to gather at the appropriate assembly point. Children will be told to hold hands and will be accompanied by adults at all times.
6. Person in charge to delegate an adult to call emergency services using preschool mobile phone or phone box at bottom of Highlands Road.
7. Person in charge to call register to account for all children and adults

In the event of the building being unsafe to re-enter:

8. The group will be taken to the nearest safe building (Bakehouse/Southlands Court) . Person in charge will delegate an adult to remain at assembly point whilst awaiting fire brigade
9. Person in charge to contact parent/carers. At least 2 staff will remain with the children until they have been collected by parents.
10. At no point must any adult of child re-enter the building until it is safe to do so.

CURRICULUM

At Vicarage Lodge we strive to provide a stimulating, ordered and loving environment.

We aim to help children become fully developed caring people, capable of working in every way to the best of their ability.

Staff meet weekly to undertake keyworker/curriculum planning.

By means of developmentally appropriate play activities and a high adult:child ratio we offer a balanced, flexible curriculum which provides children with opportunities to work towards the Early Years Foundation Stage.

These being:-

- **Personal and social development:** which focuses on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family.
- **Communication and Language:** which focuses on children's developing competence in talking, understanding and listening.
- **Physical development:** which focuses on children's developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments.

- **Literacy:** which focuses on children's development of reading and writing.
- **Mathematics:** which covers aspects of mathematical understanding and provides the foundation for numeracy.
- **Understanding of the world:** which focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world.
- **Expressive Art and Design:** which focuses on the development of children's imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways.

Children's records and all details are kept safe and confidential at all times and are only accessible to Playgroup staff or respective parents.

Arrangements will be made for staff and parents to meet twice a year at parent's evenings to discuss their child's development.

However, should any problem or query arise regarding their child, parents are welcome at any time to discuss the matter.

KEY PERSON

When a child first starts preschool they will have been designated a keyperson. The keyperson will begin to liaise with the child's parents immediately, explaining who they are, what the keyperson system is and giving them an entry profile to fill in about the child. They will monitor the settling in of the child and begin the initial assessment on entry.

It is the role of the keyperson to set up and keep up to date each of their children's profiles, which they update at the end of each term. During this time they will continuously monitor each child's progress through daily and weekly observations, group assessment, individual assessment and feedback from weekly keyperson/staff meetings. This monitoring helps the keyperson assess individual needs of a child which they will then take forward into the planning of the curriculum.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

At Vicarage Lodge 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 our pre-school and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

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.

We like to think that parents could bring to the Preschool staff any complaints or misunderstandings and discuss them openly and hopefully resolve the problem.

Complaints of a formal or serious nature should be referred to the Chairperson of the management committee. Should there be a need for further action or if the parent would prefer to deal independently, the following department should be contacted:

Ofsted National Business Unit
Picadilly Gate, Store Street
Manchester, M1 2WD
Tel 0300 123 1231
Email – enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

At Vicarage Lodge all staff are aware of the sensitive nature of child abuse.

All staff have undertaken some relevant training and will continue to do so.

We would reassure all concerned that if we were worried in any way, we would take the necessary action and act in a confidential manner.

In the event of a parent/carer attempting to collect a child from Preschool under the influence of drink/drugs, the Preschool staff have the authority not to release the child, but in his/her interest we would telephone the following:

1. Emergency contact number
2. Contact Duty Officer
3. Police

In cases of sexual abuse, in the interest of the child's safety, the Preschool Manager or Deputy would have the authority to contact the Duty Officer directly.

CHILD ILLNESS POLICY

In the event of a child becoming ill during a Preschool session the child will be isolated from the other children, and will stay with a member of staff. Meanwhile, the parents/emergency contact will be informed and asked to collect the child as soon as possible.

Should there be an outbreak of any communicable infection, e.g. Rubella, Conjunctivitis, Chicken Pox, Whooping Cough etc. all parents will be informed by the notice board and/or the newsletter.

In order to ensure that children and staff are protected from infectious diseases and blood borne viruses, adults in Preschool will ensure certain good hygiene practises are observed, as specified in our Health Policy.

We would reassure all concerned that any parent wishing to discuss issues relating to HIV and their child may do so in the strictest confidence.

Staff at Preschool are aware of current information regarding HIV and the under 5's. Where appropriate, staff will attend in-service training.

HEALTH

Parents are asked not to bring into Preschool any child with infectious diseases, i.e. Measles, Rubella, Chicken Pox, Mumps, Head Lice, Impetigo and Conjunctivitis until all symptoms subside.

It is not our policy to administer medications unless prescribed by a doctor.

When we do administer medication, we require written information from the parent, giving clear instructions about the dosage, administration of the medication and permission for a member of staff to follow the instructions.

To prevent the spread of all infection, adults in the group will ensure certain good practises are observed.

- Hands are washed after using the toilet

- A large box of tissues is available and children are encouraged to blow and wipe their noses when necessary
- Children are encouraged to shield their mouths when coughing
- Paper towels used and disposed of appropriately
- Staff wear gloves when cleaning or clearing up
- Staff wear gloves when dealing with accidents or illnesses
- Open cuts or sores must be covered

SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

At Vicarage Lodge we have regard for the DfES Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practise (2014) to ensure the identification, assessment and response to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

All children are admitted to Preschool and staff will support parents and children with special needs and disabilities. To do this staff work in close partnership with parents taking their views into account and other agencies where necessary to meet the individual needs of the child.

At Vicarage Lodge we aim to identify the special needs of children with SEND through our observation and record keeping which operates in conjunction with parents ensuring the child's needs are met. Where Individual SEN Support Plans are in place these are monitored regularly, working with the input of parents and outside agencies where necessary.

These records are confidential and parents are kept informed and are able to contribute at all stages of assessment, planning, any interaction between outside agencies and the SENCO and all reviews of their child's education. We also monitor and review our practise and provision and make appropriate adjustments.

Parents are given information on sources of independent advice. They are also informed about the complaints and appeals procedure.

There is a member of staff at Vicarage Lodge who is a qualified SENCO's (Special Educational Needs Coordinators). If a special need is identified the SENCO's name is given to parents. The SENCO's attends continuous training in special needs issues.

All staff are aware of children with special needs and this is supported by the child's keyperson and the SENCO. Information about special needs acquired by the SENCO's through training is cascaded to staff where necessary.

Preschool uses an inclusive play strategy, which makes play opportunities conducive to inclusion. Differentiations are made in planning to meet the needs on individual children. The physical environment is assessed before a child with SEND is admitted to preschool. If changes need to be made to the environment or extra equipment needed, funding will be sought for purchase, hire or adaptation. All specialist equipment will be checked regularly for damage or that it is fulfilling its required purpose. Any changes or repairs will be carried out as soon as possible.

The SENCO and keyperson will liaise with other professionals to ensure a successful transition between schools or settings. Relevant information will be passed to new settings with parental consent.

DIET

The sharing of refreshments can play an important part in the social life of our Preschool.

- All food snacks provided are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings
- A multi-cultural diet is offered to ensure that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and all children have the opportunity to also try unfamiliar foods.
- Children's medical and personal dietary requirements are respected

Milk provided for children is semi skimmed, we also have water as an alternative.

Lunch Club

We operate a lunch club from 12noon to 12.45pm. This may be used as an add on to a session or to combine two sessions allowing children to access a full day in preschool. Places must be booked for a full term and we require parents to provide a healthy packed lunch for their child.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. At Vicarage Lodge Pre-School Playgroup, we believe that our group's activities should be open to all children and families irrespective of race, colour, religion, disability or HIV/AIDS.
2. We will encourage each child to fully develop as an individual.
3. All children and adults will be spoken to and treated with respect. Consideration will be given to individual personalities and needs.
4. All children will be encouraged to become involved in all daily activities.
5. All boys and girls will be rewarded and disciplined in the same way. We endorse positive desirable behaviour, and any negative, racist or sexist behaviour will not be tolerated.
6. We promote respect and tolerance of others, regardless of race, creed or other differences enabling each child to begin to develop an open view of the world and all its people.
7. All children will be treated as individuals, therefore appropriate activities are devised daily to cater for every child's needs.
8. Our literature and resources will be reviewed and updated regularly, maintaining high standards of appropriate educational materials.
9. Our activities will include information and resources from a wide range of cultures and environments and will provide opportunities for the discussion of other societies, values and beliefs.

10. Appropriate methods and materials will be used to help children whose first language is not English.
11. All children will be offered the opportunity to play outdoors and to participate in playgroup outings.
12. We would like to enlist the co-operation of all preschool staff, all children and their parents and all visitors to playgroup in the implementation of this policy.

EQUIPMENT AND TOYS

We provide toys and equipment to enable children, with adult help, to develop new skills and concepts. Our equipment will help a child to move forward in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The equipment we provide is appropriate for the ages and stages of the children.

Equipment conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is sound and well made. Equipment is checked regularly, and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.

We have a large outside play area. Our equipment is extensive, of good quality, is erected with care and checked regularly.



Session Times

Morning 9.00 - 12.00

Lunch Club 12.00 - 12.45

Afternoon 12.45 - 3.45

Fees

Session (3 hours) £11.00

Lunch Club session - £4.20

Snack per session - 32p

Fees/times may be subject to change, please contact the preschool for up to date information.

March 2020

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