



WOODHAM MORTIMER PRE-SCHOOL

PROSPECTUS
2009 / 2010

Welcome to Woodham Mortimer Pre-School

In this prospectus we hope to give you the information you will need to help you and your child feel happy with this new experience.

If you would like further information or would like to make an appointment to visit the pre-school, please contact Janice Williams (Pre-School Practice Manager Tel: 07742 228077) or take a look at our website www.woodhammortimerpreschool.org.uk. You can also e-mail us at woodhammortimerpre-school@hotmail.com

Dear Parents / Carers

Welcome to Woodham Mortimer Pre-school! The first day of pre-school is an exciting milestone in your child's life. Your child is embarking on a journey that will lead them on many roads of discovery and learning. As wonderful as this new experience may be, it can also be quite stressful for the young child. New situations and change can, at times, be unsettling for all of us. For many children this may be their first experience of separation from parents or care givers at home. It is common for even the most outgoing child to be anxious on their first day of pre-school.

We have provided a few suggestions for assisting your child during this time. Remember the pre-school staff will be available to provide support and assistance, making your child's first school days happy days.

Some suggestions for your child's first day at pre-school:

- ☺ Prepare your child for the new experience by explaining what to expect. Answer all questions directly and honestly.
- ☺ Convey a positive attitude. Young children are aware of your feelings. Your enthusiasm will assure the child that pre-school can be a fun and exciting place.
- ☺ Bring something from home. This is acceptable and often reassuring for your child in the initial adjustment to pre-school. The item may be a treasured blanket or even a photo from home.
- ☺ Clearly state to your child where you will be and when you will return. It may also be helpful to discuss what will happen when you are reunited.
- ☺ Maintain a clear goodbye routine. This may include warning the child that you are leaving in 3 minutes, a kiss and a hug, or a wave from the window. Once you tell your child you are leaving, it is important to follow through. Extending the good-bye with "OK just one more kiss" tends to heighten the anxiety rather than relieve it. Avoid sneaking out as this seems to encourage children to become less trusting and makes the second day of school even harder.

Please know that we are here to help make the first day of school a happy transition and we look forward to an exciting and fun year. Welcome!

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INTRODUCTION

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

‘To enhance the development and education of children, primarily under statutory school age, by encouraging parents to understand and provide for the needs of their children through community groups.’

AIMS OF THE PRE-SCHOOL

- To provide a happy, caring and safe play environment in a friendly atmosphere and to give the children lots of fun.
- To provide caring and experienced staff.
- To encourage the various stages of development and education of children under statutory school age.
- To give children as much confidence and independence as possible.
- To work within the framework which ensures equality of opportunity for all children and families.

WE OFFER YOUR CHILD

- A specially tailored curriculum leading to approved Early Learning Goals.
- A high ratio of adults to children to enable individual care and attention.
- Fun and friendship with children and adults.
- The support of a personal Key Person.
- Opportunities for you and your family to be directly involved in the activities of the pre-school and in your own child’s progress.

STARTING AT PRE-SCHOOL

ADMISSION TO WOODHAM MORTIMER PRE-SCHOOL

It is our intention to make our pre-school accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. Places are allocated from the waiting list according to the month the child reaches 2 years of age with children from Woodham Mortimer, Woodham Walter and Hazeleigh given priority if spaces are limited.

JOINING OUR PRE-SCHOOL

To register your child please contact Janice Williams (Pre-School Practice Manager) on 07742 228077. We will ask you to fill in an application and a registration forms and to bring your child's birth certificate with you. We encourage you to make visits to the pre-school before your child starts, so that he / she becomes familiar with the new surroundings and so that you will have the opportunity to discuss pre-school procedures with the staff.

SETTLING IN AT PRE-SCHOOL

We know that starting pre-school is a huge step for your child and a sign of growing up. Although it is an exciting time, for some parents and children it can also be an anxious and emotional time. We want your child to feel safe and happy and to recognise other adults as a source of help, friendship and authority.

Our settling-in procedures aim to help you both to feel comfortable in the pre-school and to ensure that your child can benefit fully from what the group has to offer. The staff at Woodham Mortimer Pre-School have many years experience between them. Any individual problems are dealt with sympathetically and you will be kept informed of any difficulties that may arise.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We aim to provide a warm welcome and appropriate learning opportunities for all children. The needs and progress of children who have special educational needs are monitored by our Pre-School Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) and Deputy SENCO.

TEACHING

PRE-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Woodham Mortimer Pre-School follows The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This Curriculum is the first stage of the National Curriculum focusing on the distinct needs of children from birth to the end of the reception year at Primary School.

The Early Years Foundation stage has four Themes and Commitments which our pre-school is committed to, these are:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Developing

And six areas of Learning and Development:

1. *Communication, Language and Literacy*
2. *Personal, Social and Emotional Development*
3. *Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy*
4. *Physical Development*
5. *Knowledge and Understanding of the World*
6. *Creative Development*

Each learning area has Early Learning Goals. These set out the skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge which children should reach or exceed by the end of their Foundation Stage. By means of appropriate play activities and a high level of adult input, all children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace. Parents will be kept informed of the curriculum plans and themes for the term in the pre-school newsletter and on the notice board at the entrance to the hall.

TEACHING STAFF

At Woodham Mortimer Pre-School we are very proud of our staff and the level of training they have achieved. The pre-school staff regularly attend courses promoted by Essex Early Years to keep their training up-to-date. Some of the staff have completed the PSLA Diploma and/or NNEB courses, whilst other members of the staff are working towards their Child Care Level 2 Diploma. The Supervisor is studying for her NVQ Level 4 and the Deputy Supervisor is studying for her Foundation Degree. You will be kept informed of staff training in the pre-school newsletter.

Our maximum number of children per session is 25 and each session has a **minimum** staffing ratio of 1:8 for children over the age of 3 and 1:4 for those under 3. This usually means approximately one teacher for every five children.

KEYPERSON SYSTEM

When your child starts pre-school, he / she will be assigned to a member of staff who will become your child's personal Keyperson. Our Keyperson system ensures that each adult is especially responsible for approximately 6 children. This ensures that each child receives plenty of adult time and education, with the aim of helping them to reach their Early Learning Goals. Parents can ask their assigned Keyperson for information or advice concerning their child.

DAY-TO-DAY INFORMATION

PRE-SCHOOL SESSION TIMES

Monday	9.15 – 12.15	3 hours
Tuesday – morning session	9.15 – 11.45	2½ hours
Tuesday – afternoon session (3+)	11.45 – 14.45	3 hours
Tuesday All Day	9.15 – 14-45	5½ hours
Wednesday	9.15 – 11.45	2½ hours
Thursday – morning session	9.15 – 11.45	2½ hours
Thursday – afternoon session (3+)	12.15 – 14.45	3 hours
Thursday All Day	9.15 – 14-45	5½ hours
Friday	9.15 – 12.15	3 hours

There is a signing-in book on the table at the entrance of the hall. Please remember to sign your child in at the beginning of the session and out at the end of the session as this is part of our fire safety precautions. You will also find useful information on the notice board near the table. Please arrive promptly to collect your child at the end of the session.

EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL PRE-SCHOOL MORNING

When your child starts pre-school he / she will be allocated a picture. When you enter the hall, your child will need to find their name and place it onto their allocated picture. This will help to develop name recognition. There will also be a picture on one of the pegs where he / she will hang up his / her coat and pre-school bag.

9.15 Free play with a wide range of indoor activities on offer, these include creative activities, construction, role play, drawing and pre-writing skills, playdoh, sand, puzzles, books and use of the computer. When all the children have arrived, they will be asked to sit in the book corner so that the register can be taken. After the register, freeplay continues. This time also includes our snack bar where the children can choose when to have something to eat and drink. Snack consists of milk or water to drink and healthy snacks including fresh fruit, vegetables and bread or crackers.

11.00 In accordance with The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, children will have the opportunity to play outside whatever the weather. Therefore, please ensure that your child has suitable waterproof clothing and wellington boots with them each day and warm clothing including coat, hat and gloves in the winter months. The pre-school has a wide selection of outside toys for use on the hard area behind the hall and on the field including tricycles, scooters, cars, slides, seesaws and tunnels. They will also have the opportunity to join in other activities such as parachute and ring games.

11.30 Circle time is when we sing songs and listen to a story.

Times may be slightly altered depending on whether the session runs for 2½ or 3 hours. Afternoon sessions follow a similar format, but include more structured activities, whilst still following the ethos of learning through play, for our 3+ children.

INTEREST BOX

During registration, time is set aside to discuss objects which the children have brought from home relating to the theme or letter of the week. Please encourage your child to bring something as this will help towards building your child's confidence and self esteem. Themes and letters of the week are announced in the pre-school's newsletter and will also be on the notice board.

WHAT WILL YOUR CHILD NEED TO BRING TO PRE-SCHOOL?

Each day your child will need to bring:

- A named bag containing a change of clothes (including nappies and wipes if needed).
- Waterproof clothing and a pair of named Wellington boots. In winter, please bring warm coat, hat and gloves.
- An item relating to the theme, number or letter of the week.
- Lunch for all day sessions

During the summer term we ask that you put sun cream on your child before pre-school and ensure that he / she wears a sunhat as during fine weather the children are outside as much as possible.

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

When your child reaches 3 years old he / she can attend the afternoon sessions, during which we aim to provide activities which will further enhance the learning process including activities encouraging letter and number recognition, opportunities to practice writing their name and focusing on creativity through music, movement and art.

The pre-school helps to lay the foundation of reading in many ways by showing children how to hold a book correctly, how to turn the pages and follow the text from left to right and encouraging them to predict what will happen on the next page or to make up an ending. Your child is able to borrow a book of his / her choice to enjoy at home if he / she wishes (there is no pressure for a child to read a book. Please return the book every week.

The children will also stay for lunch which provides an excellent opportunity to learn social skills and to practice eating together as they would be expected to do at primary school. Each child will need to bring a clearly named packed lunch which contains an ice pack.

PLAYING AND LEARNING FOR 'BIG SCHOOL'

Children are learning all the time and, for them, playing is working. They could be learning to share with other children, deciding how to play in the home corner or being creative on the sticking table. As a first step towards learning to read and write we encourage your child to love books and stories, to recognise shapes and to hold pencils and brushes. Above all, the children and staff have a lot of fun together in the pre-school so your child will not be afraid to take the next step to primary school. Children from our pre-school go on to many different schools. We are confident that we will have given them the best possible start and we hope your child's time at Woodham Mortimer pre-school will be happy and productive. We would like to advise parents that Woodham Mortimer Pre-School is one of the feeder pre-schools into Danbury Park School, Danbury St Johns, Woodham Walter and Purleigh as well as many other primary schools in the area.

PARENT / CARERS INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRE-SCHOOL

Parents / carers are the first educators of their young children. The aim of the pre-school is to support parents / carers in this essential role. We will:

- Ensure that all parents / carers are given information on a regular basis about their child's progress and have the opportunity to discuss this with staff.
- Ensure that parents / carers have the opportunity to contribute from their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the group.
- Encourage parents / carers on an individual basis to play an active part in the management of the pre-school.

If you wish to become more involved in the running of the pre-school, parent helpers are always appreciated in sessions (we operate a parent rota and encourage parents to sign up for one session per term).

The pre-school is a charity, not a private business, and as such is run by a committee of volunteers. They are a friendly group of mums and dads who meet once a month to discuss any issues relating to pre-school, for example Finances and Funding, Fundraising and Promotional Events, Staffing and Child Numbers. Joining the committee gives you a real opportunity to influence certain aspects of the running of the pre-school. Any volunteers who would be able to help out with things such as stalls at fetes, leaflet drops, fundraising and general ideas for the benefit of the pre-school would be greatly appreciated and if you were also able to attend the monthly meeting, that would be a bonus.

Please be aware that without the Committee and Fundraising, the pre-school cannot operate and would have to close.

If you are able to offer any assistance or have any queries, please feel free to contact the Chairperson for further information.

PRE-SCHOOL SECURITY / FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURE

Our aim is to provide a safe learning environment for your child. We ask parents / carers to be very careful on entering and leaving the building and to close the main door securely. After parents / carers have left the pre-school's main entrance, the door will be locked for the remainder of the session and the key will be kept at adult level. There are two alternative fire doors which can be opened by an adult from the inside of the building in the case of an emergency. We always have a member of staff on the main entrance door at the beginning and end of each session to ensure that children do not leave the building without their parent / carer.

If someone other than you is collecting your child, please tell a member of staff and write the name of the person who is collecting your child in the signing in book. In the pre-school application form, you will be asked for a list of people authorised to collect your child. When children play outside they are supervised by at least 2 members of staff and are not allowed in the car park. A temporary fence is put up across the car park entrance during session times. If you are driving your child to pre-school we ask that you use the car park available and avoid parking along the road.

The staff and children practice the Fire Drill Procedure at least four times a term. A Fire Safety Test involving parents is also carried out annually for one week at collection time. A note will be sent to parents in advance notifying them of the dates / times of the fire drill. Parents are encouraged to attend one fire drill a year to familiarise themselves with the procedures in case of an emergency at either drop off or collection.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

We believe that children will flourish best in an ordered environment where they know what is expected of them and are free to develop their play without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to enable children to develop self-discipline and good self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. The pre-school rules are:

- Children must not enter the kitchen unsupervised.
- Children must not go outside unsupervised.
- Children must not run around the hall.
- Children must not throw sand.
- Children must not hit, kick, bite or hurt each other.
- Children must not tease each other or call each other names.
- Children must sit at the table to have drinks / snacks.

These rules are reinforced in a positive manner eg. children are reminded to *walk* in the hall and to keep sand *in the sandpit*. Parents / carers will be informed of any inappropriate behaviour.

LATENESS

If a child does not arrive within 15 minutes of session starting time, the pre-school will assume that he / she is not attending the session. Staff will then have the opportunity to offer that session to another child for 'Pay and Play'. Please inform a member of staff if you know your child will be late. At the end of each session, please ensure that you collect your child promptly.

ABSENCE FROM PRE-SCHOOL

If your child cannot attend a session, a telephone call to the pre-school would be appreciated. If you take your child out of pre-school for a holiday, please let the pre-school know in writing with the dates your child will be away. Please note that the pre-school will not refund fees to parents / carers who wish to take their child on holiday during term time.

PAY AND PLAY

Once it has been established that the pre-school session is not full, then a 'Pay and Play' place can be offered on a first-come first-served basis. The cost of 'Pay and Play' is the normal session fee.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS

In case of accident or illness, First Aid care is given by one of the members of staff with first aid training. The pre-school ensures that at least one member of staff who is fully trained in First Aid will be on duty each session. Accidents, however small, are entered into the Accident Book and parents will be informed.

It is essential for us to know about any medical history, condition, allergies or current treatment / medication. If your child becomes ill during a pre-school session we will contact you by telephone. Therefore, we ask for an up-to-date record of emergency contact telephone numbers which may include your home, work, and mobile numbers. We will also ask for the name and address of your family doctor, and for your signature authorising staff to seek emergency treatment for your child if we cannot contact you. Please keep your child at home if he / she has an infection and inform the pre-school as to the nature of the infection so that we can alert other parents / carers if necessary. Parents / carers are asked not to bring a child to pre-school who has been vomiting or had diarrhoea until **48 hours** has elapsed since the last attack.

ADMINISTRATION

PRE-SCHOOL RECORDS

Early Learning Goals records are kept on all children at the pre-school as recommended by the PSLA. This involves identifying each child's progress in each area of the curriculum. Formative assessments are carried out informally by your child's Keyworker in the course of his / her teaching.

The records are the property of the parent / carer and can be viewed at any time. All records are kept strictly confidential and are stored accordingly.

EVIDENCE FOLDERS

These folders contain all the pre-school's Curriculum Plans, Policies, Staff qualifications, OFSTED reports, Editorials, Early Learning Goals, Topic Webs, and minutes from committee meetings. If you wish to look at the folders, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff.

PRE-SCHOOL POLICIES

Woodham Mortimer Pre-School Policies are designed to offer the best possible experience for the children and families in the pre-school. Policies are available at all times in the pre-school setting. Please ask the pre-school supervisor for the policies folder and the pre-school committee chairperson for clarification if necessary.

Policies include:

- Child Protection
- Behaviour Management
- Special Needs
- Equal Opportunities
- Admissions
- Settling In
- Health and Safety
- Hygiene
- Diet
- Selecting Play Equipment and Toys
- Intruders Policy
- Staffing and Employment
- Student Placement
- Parental Involvement
- Confidentiality
- Complaints Procedure
- Attendance
- Fees
- Holiday Refunds
- Late Collection of your child
- Child not collected
- Pre-school insurance

THE OFFICE FOR STANDARDS IN EDUCATION (OFSTED)

From September 2001, OFSTED took over responsibility for inspection and regulation of day care providers for under 8's. Our last OFSTED inspection was in April 2007 and we are very proud of the outcome. You will find all our OFSTED reports at www.ofsted.gov.uk (Unique Reference Number 650168) or alternatively the pre-school supervisor can supply you with a copy.

PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING ALLIANCE (PSLA)

Woodham Mortimer Pre-School is a member of the PSLA which is an educational charity offering support to pre-school groups. The priorities of the PSLA include:

- Quality education and care for pre-school children.
- The support of the children's families.
- The creation of a developmentally appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of each individual child.
- The sharing of information, resources and practical advice.
- Equal opportunities for both children and adults.
- Supporting parents as prime educators of their children.
- The personal development of adults involved in providing for children by means of community groups.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS

As a member of the PSLA, we aim to provide the highest education and care for all children. If you have a concern, please talk in the first instance to your child's keyworker or to the pre-school supervisor. The pre-school committee is also there to assist you. We believe that it is in the best interests of the pre-school and parents that complaints should be dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

Essex (PSLA) contact: Carole Rand 01245 445444

OFSTED contact: Complaints 0845 6014772
(URN 650168) Helpline 0845 6014771

REGISTERED CHARITY

Woodham Mortimer Pre-School is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The pre-school's charity number is 1060526.

The pre-school relies on fees and government funding as well as income generated from fundraising.

To comply with government legislation, an elected committee must hold an Annual General Meeting which takes place in the Autumn Term.

PRE-SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Woodham Mortimer Pre-School is run by an elected voluntary committee which ensures that major decision-making is in the hands of the parents who use the pre-school. The committee is responsible for reviewing pre-school policies and practice and for the employment of staff.

The committee is made up of parents who are elected at the Annual General Meeting. As already mentioned, fundraising is an important part of the committee's work as fees and funding only cover the basic costs. We rely on income generated from fundraising events to supply new toys, books and resources for activities at the pre-school. The committee produces a newsletter each term to update you with all the fundraising events and ideas and any forthcoming events together with adhoc notices throughout the term. In an effort to keep pre-school costs down and protect the environment, these will be e-mailed out to you so please ensure that you keep us up to date with your e-mail address.

If you would like to be more involved in the pre-school, any help will be appreciated. The committee generally meets once a month in the evening for a couple of hours. Please contact the committee chairperson for more details if you feel able to help in any way.

PRE-SCHOOL FEES

DAY	TIME	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL COST (if not yet funded)	TOP UP FEE IF FUNDED	PACKED LUNCH
Monday	9.15 – 12.15	3	£11.50	£2.15	X
Tuesday AM	9.15 – 11.45	2½	£9.50	£0	X
Tuesday PM (3+)	11.45 – 2.45	3	£11.50	£2.15	√
Tuesday ALL DAY (Age 3+) = 2 funded sessions	9.15 – 2.45	5½	£21.00	£4.30	√
Wednesday)	9.15 – 11.45	2½	£9.50	£0	X
Thursday AM	9.15 – 11.45	2½	£9.50	£0	X
Thursday PM (3+)	11.45 – 2.45	3	£11.50	£2.15	√
Thursday ALL DAY (Age 3+) = 2 funded sessions	9.15 – 2.45	5½	£21.00	£4.30	√
Friday	9.15 – 12.15	3	£11.50	£2.15	X

Payment of fees is due for the term in advance and not later than by the end of the second week of term. You will be given a fee note advising you of the fee cost and amount payable for the term. If you have any difficulties in paying the fees, please talk to the finance officer. If you have twins, we offer discounted fees before government funding becomes available. Please ask for details.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The term after your child's third birthday, he / she will be entitled to government funding for up to 5 x 2½ hour sessions per week for up to 38 weeks per year. Therefore a top-up fee of £2.15 is payable for each Monday, Tuesday afternoon, Thursday afternoon and Friday session as these are 3 hours each. If your child attends all day Tuesday or Thursday, the top up fee will be £4.30 as there needs to be lunchtime cover for staff who are there all day.

The pre-school will give you a funding application form when your child is eligible for funding. Please fill in the form and return it to us as soon as possible with evidence of your child's age (evidence is only necessary the first time when applying for funding). A new funding form is needed every term until your child leaves for primary school. These forms will be given to you at the end of each term. Please note that you will only be funded for the number of sessions stated on your form for that term.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Address	Woodham Mortimer Pre-school Woodham Mortimer Village Hall Post Office Road Woodham Mortimer Maldon CM9 6SX	
Telephone Number	07742 228077	
Website	www.woodhammortimerpreschool.org.uk	
e-mail	woodhammortimerpre-school@hotmail.com	
Teaching Staff and Policies / Special Areas they are responsible for	Pre-School Practice Manager Janice Williams	Policies – Supports Mercy Babu and Claire Newman
	Pre-School Deputy Supervisors Mercy Mahesh-Babu NVQ Level 4 Claire Newman Level 3	Policies – Complaints (supported by Janice Williams) Health, Hygiene and Safety Deputy SENCO (Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator) SENCO (Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator) Policies – Equality, Inclusion and Valuing Diversity (supported by Janice Williams)
	Pre-school Assistants	
	Frances Richardson Level 2	Policies – Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Special interest in child protection, music and science
	Susan Shaylor Level 3	Policies – Behaviour Management (supported by Claire Newman)
	Julia Moore Level 2	
	Caroline Tozer Level 2	
	Hannah Abbott Level 3	

Finance Officer (including fees and funding)	Janine Archer
Pre-School Committee	Chairperson Kayte Terrett (01245 226443 or 07702 850915) woodhammortimerpre-school@hotmail.com Treasurer Liz Vellacott Secretary Rebecca Peacock