

Dear Parents,

We are delighted to welcome you to St. Paul's Pre-School. This booklet is produced to inform you about our Pre-School and our contribution to your child's early education.

At St. Paul's we recognise that you are the most important people in your child's life. Your interest and encouragement are most welcome and promise to benefit your child throughout their life. A good relationship between parents and Pre-School staff will give your child the confidence to explore experiences their new environment has to offer. We warmly invite you to join us for a range of activities during your child's time within Pre-School.



We aim to:

- Provide an atmosphere of warmth, care and justice in which children, parents, families and the wider community are accepted, affirmed and welcomed
- Build positive relationships in which we help each other explore our uniqueness, gifts and strengths and grow in self-worth
- Provide 'Outstanding' education and care for every child, every day
- Work in partnership with parents and families to enable children to learn, develop and make rapid progress
- Make a positive contribution to the life and well-being of the local community

Opening times

We are open for 39 weeks of the year (term-time only). You will receive a holiday list when your child starts Pre-School.

Our sessions are: Mornings 9.00am until 12.00pm – lunch included.  
Afternoons 12.00pm until 3.00pm – lunch included.

Our Pre-School provides places for up to 32 children at each session (morning and afternoon). As part of your child's nursery education, lunchtime experiences will be offered daily. Please provide your child with a healthy packed lunch each day, place the school lunch in the large box in the cloakroom (no nuts or nut products – due to allergies – thank you). School dinners are available during the morning session priced £1.25. Please pay lunch money at the beginning of every week.

There are also a number of 'full-day' places in which children can stay from 9.00am until 3.00pm; please discuss your needs with the Pre-School manager. Our staffing ratios are high: 1 adult to 8 children, although there is often an extra member of staff at each session over and above the ratios. A minimum of 2 staff are on duty at any one time.

### Pre-School Staff

We have a fantastic longstanding team of highly qualified and experienced practitioners to work with your children. In our cloakroom we have a display with names and faces to help you and your children get to know us.

Manager Donna Southgate

Nursery Teacher Alan Moore

Deputy Manager Michelle Quinn

Nursery Nurse Wendy Ramsay

Nursery Nurse Siobhan Farrar

Nursery Nurse Joanne Goerd

### Equality of Opportunity

All children and their families are welcome at St. Paul's. Many children during their school life will need additional support in one area or another. Joanne Goerd is our Special Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDSCO). She works closely with the manager and parents to meet the needs of all children who require extra help, including involving external agencies where necessary to support individual needs. Our curriculum is carefully planned and differentiated to the individual needs of all children.





## Funding

The Government provides funding via Northumberland County Council for all 3 and 4 year old children. This entitles your child to five 'free' 3-hour sessions per week.

Childcare charges are as follows:-

Extra session AM/PM      £15 each.

Payment for all childcare sessions should be made every Monday, or else monthly, to enable staffing ratios to be in place. If your child is on holiday or sick, **places must still be paid for**. If your child's allocated day coincides with a planned school trip, fees must still be paid.

## Children's Development and Learning

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by "The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage". The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure 'school readiness' and gives children a broad range of knowledge and skills to equip them to progress through life.

The four overarching principles which shape our practice are:

### A UNIQUE CHILD

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

### POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

### ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

### LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. The Framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

## Areas of Development and Learning

### *How we provide for development and learning*

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue and extend this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The 7 areas of Learning and Development which shape our educational programme are -

#### Prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

#### Specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design.

For each area the practice guidance sets out the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know and be able to do by the end of their reception year.

The practice guidance also sets out in 'Development Matters' what are the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the early learning goals. We use development matters and these 'stages of progress' to inform our daily teaching, planning and assessment.

Related document: *Learning through play – a curriculum guide.*



## Our approach to learning development and assessment

### *Learning through play*

Play helps young children to develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. We use the practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage to plan and provide a range of play activities inside and outside the classroom which help children to make progress in each of the areas of development. In some of these activities the children decide how they will use the activity, while in others adults



will take the lead in helping children to take part in the activity - thus scaffolding their learning and moving them on to the next stage. Every activity is purposely planned for and informed by the previous day's observations of children and their interests.

### *Assessment*

We assess how young children are learning and developing through daily observations. We use information that we gain from observations, photographs and notes to document each child's progress and decide where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and ask you to contribute to the observations, sharing information about your child's development and interests at home. Wow forms can be filled in to share achievements and special times at home.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing developmental records. These form part of the children's records of achievement or learning journey and are summarised at the end of each term and on transition to the reception class.

### The Learning Journey

Staff, parents and children work together to build a holistic record of your child's progress. Your child's learning journey helps us to celebrate their achievements and plan together what your child needs for his/her well-being and to make progress.

Your child's key person will work with you to keep this record. To do this, you and she/he will collect information about your child's interests, needs and achievements.

Related documentation: Early Years Foundation Stage Policy, Outdoor Play Policy, Transition Policy.



### How parents take part in the setting.

We recognise parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All staff see themselves as your partners in providing care and education for your child. We encourage you to take part in the life of the setting by:

- Exchanging knowledge with staff about your children's needs, activities, interests and progress
- Helping at sessions within the setting
- Sharing your own special skills and interests with children
- Helping to make, provide and look after materials and resources within the setting
- Taking part in outings and trips
- Taking part in community activities
- Building friendships with other parents in the setting

Related document: Parents as Partners Policy

### Key person and your child

Our setting uses a 'key person' approach. This means that each member of staff has a small group of children for whom she/he is responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that we provide what is right for your child's particular needs and interests. A key person will be appointed for your child before starting Pre-School and will help them to settle in.

### Settling in

Before your child starts Pre-School we will provide you with information about our setting. During the half-term before your child is due to start you and your child will be invited into school for a visit; a second visit or home visit may be arranged at this time. Parents are required to stay with their children during visits. On the day of the visit your child will meet staff and spend time with their key person and your child's settling-in plan will be discussed. We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them settle any quicker and ask parents/carers to be prepared to stay with their child if they are distressed.

Related document: Key person and settling-in Policy

### Learning opportunities for adults

It is extremely important to our setting that staff keep up-to-date with training and development within early years education. All staff will attend at least three external sessions per year and regular in-service training. All staff are trained in Paediatric First Aid, Asthma, Anaphylaxis and Child Protection which is updated every three years.

Students and other practitioners are regular visitors to our setting where we share and celebrate good practice.

## Uniforms

To help promote a sense of belonging we ask that your children wear a uniform.

Girls: Pale blue or white polo shirt or blouse

Grey skirt, trousers or pinafore dress

Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan

A blue checked dress may be worn during Summer term

Boys: Pale blue or white polo shirt or shirt

Grey trousers or shorts

Royal blue sweatshirt

Sweatshirts are available in Pre-School at a cost of £11.00 and cardigans at £12.00.

Book bags are available at £6.00 each.

**N.B. PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS OF CLOTHING AND SHOES**

## Routines and timetable

We believe that care and education are equally important in the experience we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in the setting are provided in ways that:

- Help children feel they are valued and so develop a sense of belonging
- Ensure the safety of each child
- Help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group
- Provide children with stimulating opportunities to learn and value learning.



## Drinks and Snacks

Milk and drinking water are available at each session. Children are made aware that drinks are available throughout the session, especially after physical activities or in warm weather. Snacks are also provided at each session. This is an opportunity to introduce children to foods they might not be willing to try at home. Seeing other children eating often encourages 'fussy' eaters to have a taste!

Related document: Food Hygiene Policy



## Policies

At St. Paul's we have many policies and procedures to help us make sure the service provided is of high quality and is an enjoyable experience for each child and their family.

Copies of the setting's policies and procedures are found in the cloakroom in a file – please do not remove them. Copies are readily available on request.

## Fire Safety

Evacuation procedures are posted in the classroom and the cloakroom; please familiarise yourself with these. We have a termly whole-school fire drill and foundation stage (Pre-School and Reception) have additional half-termly fire drills.

## Health and Hygiene

The premises are cleaned professionally by the school caretaker and his team daily. Daily rota systems are in place for toys and equipment to be cleaned daily. Children are given opportunities through daily routines and adult-led activities to learn about a healthy and hygienic lifestyle. Children are always encouraged to wash their hands using soap as well as brush their teeth after our lunchtime meal.

## Risk Assessment

Daily risk assessments are carried out and recorded by staff to ensure the safety of each child and adult in our setting. If any parent / carer is concerned about any aspect of safety, please speak to a member of staff.





### Illness / Absences

If your child has an infection, please keep them at home and inform the setting about the nature of the infection. If your child has been vomiting or suffered diarrhoea please keep them at home until 48 hours have elapsed since the last attack. Cuts or open sores should be covered with a plaster or dressing. If your child has an eye infection (bloodshot, sticky or weeping) please keep them at home until the infection is cleared. Should your child be absent, please contact the manager or deputy manager before 9.15am on 07811 973 027 or 07761 735 585, or on the direct line 07444 336 204. Only in an emergency contact the school secretary on 01670 713553.

### Safeguarding Children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. Our employment practices ensure against the likelihood of abuse in our setting and we have procedures for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

We work closely with children and parents so that we can be aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to relevant agencies.

### Complaints Procedure

We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs. We work in partnership with parents and welcome your suggestions at any time. Many concerns can be resolved quickly by an informal chat with the Pre-School Manager. If this does not achieve the desired result you are entitled to contact

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
Tel.: 0300 123 1231

Related document: Complaints Policy.

### A Final Word

This may be the first time that someone else has been responsible for the care and welfare of your child during part of the day. If you have any problems, questions or worries, we are here to help and support you. We really do look forward to building positive relationships with your family that will continue throughout your time at Sts. Peter and Paul's Catholic Academy.

**Thank you for entrusting your precious child to us.**