



Prospectus

The Mobile Classroom
St Michaels Primary School
Ashford Road
St Michaels
Tenterden, Kent
TN30 6PU

www.stmichaels-preschool.co.uk

Pre-school Manager
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We welcome you to our pre-school and invite you to come and visit us with a view to your child attending our friendly group.

Our aim is

- ✚ To enhance the development and education of individual children under statutory school age in a caring and safe environment.
- ✚ To provide a secure and stimulating environment enabling the children to access a curriculum based on the early learning goals, helping them to achieve their full potential.
- ✚ To work within a framework which ensures equal opportunities for both children and their families, ensuring 'inclusion' at every level.
- ✚ To provide age/stage related activities and resources that will encourage the child's development, promoting their independence and confidence through their own choices.
- ✚ To encourage the children to value and respect each other.
- ✚ To promote development within the framework of the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes; staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

Early Days at Pre-school

For a young child beginning their first few weeks at pre-school, we aim to provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere. We hope a stable friendly environment will encourage them in finding their initial independence and self-confidence.

We encourage parents to come along with their children to help them settle before the child's starting date. It is a good opportunity to get to know you as well as letting your child begin the settling in process knowing that you are safely nearby. It also enables you to see what activities are available for the children during a session.

Settling in procedures are managed on an individual basis and guided by child and parental needs. On a day when you feel happy to leave them with us, a few tears may be shed but they rarely last more than a few minutes. A child will usually settle quicker if you leave when you have said goodbye. Our hope is that they will enjoy their time with us and will soon make friends. We will always call you if we feel there is a genuine problem.

Activities available to the children

We offer a wide range of activities, both indoor and outdoor environments including;

- ✚ Role play
- ✚ Collage
- ✚ Painting
- ✚ Cooking
- ✚ Playdough
- ✚ Mark making
- ✚ Construction
- ✚ Bikes and trikes
- ✚ Sand and water play
- ✚ Pre-math's and pre-science experiences

Through all these activities they will experience taking turns with others, resolving differences, group conversation and learning to share and work together enabling the children to develop their social skills. Individual activities and small group work is planned with each child's individual interests taken into account. Situated on St Michaels Primary School site we have access to the wooded area, field and playground to support all areas of the curriculum.

During a child's final academic year with us we engage in frequent shared learning with the reception class. This valuable exercise benefits all children's transitions to any of the surrounding schools into which we feed.

We offer a rolling snack time for the children to decide when they would like to have a drink and something to eat. This is time to promote independence and an opportunity to manage personal care routines. We encourage a quiet time to look at books and to partake in general conversation, stories, songs and games. Later in the morning the children are involved in the communal activity of tidying up and for those children staying for lunch, a natural hiatus between morning and afternoon.

When staying for lunch children bring in their own lunchbox and drink. We sit on small tables of five or six children and at least one member of staff at each table. This is a very sociable exercise to engage in conversation, often recapping what we have done during the morning, chatting about families, promoting healthy eating and acceptable table manners. Following on from lunch we have relaxation mats to allow a small rest period. We then discuss the afternoon session.

Curriculum

Within St Michaels Pre-school all children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace, by means of developmentally appropriate play activities. With both adult led and child initiated activities we offer a curriculum based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) themes and commitments

-  **A Unique Child**
-  **Positive Relationships**
-  **Enabling Environment**
-  **Learning and Development**

Included is the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'

-  **Playing and Exploring**
-  **Active Learning**
-  **Creative and Thinking Critically**

We work within the EYFS Development Matters Guidance. It guides but does not replace, professional judgement. The Framework sets out three prime areas of learning that underpin everything in the early years and four specific areas to help children strengthen and apply the prime areas.

PRIME AREAS

Communication and Language

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 and to be aware of the purpose of print. The book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, ability to handle them correctly and become aware of their uses both for reference and as a source of stories and pictures. We actively involve families by operating a library system so that children can choose a book with a parent or carer, borrowing it for one or more days to enjoy together at home. Added to this we take advantage of the 'mobile library' which visits Grange Road fortnightly. Taking a few children, using high visibility jackets and a walking rope, we are able to walk to the mobile. The children can, choose books and actively engage in the borrowing process.

Physical Development

A range of equipment and opportunities allow children to grow on their confidence and enjoyment and in the use and development of their own bodily skills. Our outside environment has a large mound on top of which sits a playhouse with steps. A very high level of adult supervision enables children to safely create and meet physical challenges, developing increasing skill and control in moving, climbing and balancing. Children are supported in the development of the fine motor skills through a range of activities. These are skills required to use pens and pencils, scissors etc and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Within a nurturing environment children are individually supported in confidence, independence and self-respect. They are encouraged to work and concentrate independently and also to take part in the life of the group, sharing and cooperating with other children and adults. Through activities, conversation and practical experiences they learn acceptable ways to express their own feelings gaining a sense of well-being. All children are given the opportunity when appropriate to take responsibility for themselves and also for the group its members and its property.

SPECIFIC AREAS

Literacy

Many activities are planned to explore 'mark making' resources. Inside and outside have opportunities for marker pen use, chalks, paints and crayons. Outside large paint brushes and buckets of water are popular for fence painting. Gross motor skills and coordination are the building blocks for any pre-writing experiences. Some of our activities encourage the children to use both hands, helping them to make a decision on their preference of hand.

Mathematics

Through practical experiences, all children become familiar with sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities, which form the basis for early maths. As they use their problem solving skills children are assisted to learn and use the appropriate vocabulary. Threaded throughout the environment, maths encourages the children to explore objects by shape, position, size, volume and number. Songs, games, puzzles, picture books and our very own height chart help children become aware of number sequence.

Understanding 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, recognising

differences, patterns and similarities and to share and record their findings. Children are assisted in exploring and understanding the environment both within the group, using indoors and outside and also in the wider community. Planned visits to the church, school and in our surrounding countryside support a growing knowledge of the community. Visitors to the pre-school include our PSCO who touches on 'road safety', 'safe people', how to act around dogs, and relevant language to help with internet safety. The fire engine and crew from our local depot bring their fire engine and encourage the children to explore the engine and use hoses, taking an opportunity to talk about fire safety. 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 and to solve problems. ICT equipment allows the children to build on existing know how. The computer and ipads (not connected to the internet), offer simple programmes can be used independently or with adult support.

Expressive Art and Design

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 or three dimensions. Art equipment including paint, glue, crayons, charcoal, chalk and pencils as well as natural and discarded resources provides for open ended exploration of colour, shape and texture also for 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 a group.

Adult Resources

Staff

The main body of staff have enjoyed working as a team for many years. We have at least four or five members of staff working each day. Eight staff in total, allowing staff cover for training, illness etc. All staff have a Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS), first aid certificate and further staff training is encouraged. All the staff have attained level 2 or 3 of an Early Years, Pre-school Diploma or Children's Workforce qualification. One member has achieved a Foundation Degree in Early Years (level 5). We do have an Early Years Teacher (level 6) who has achieved a BA (Hons) Degree in Early Years. Please see the staff profile on our website. All staff on induction are given a copy of the group policies, these are re visited frequently at staff meetings to ensure all staff become involved in changes due to legislation and the group's reflective practice.

Training

Training is planned for individual staff needs. All staff are supportive in covering hours and sessions to enable each other to access courses and workshops. At times we have been able to access training as a group. Network meetings are held frequently in our area so that we can chat, liaise and train with other professionals. Membership of an Early Years Collaboration ensures this.

During the 2020 pandemic of COVID-19 we became familiar with 'Zoom' staff meetings and managed a continuous training programme, accessing a vast amount of e-learning.

The Role of Parents

We recognise that parents are the first most important educators of their young children. Our pre-school aims to support parents in every way that we can. There are social opportunities during our year with a Summer Outing, Christmas show and a Christmas Party. These occasions are a great way to get to know each other better and we always have a good time. It is paramount that we work in partnership with parents/carers and outside agencies to ensure a child has the confidence to develop their full potential. We value the parent/carer input in their child's 'Early Years Journal'. Using 'Tapestry', (an online assessment tool) we are able to engage with and involve you and your family. The observations by key people are uploaded continually and opportunities for you to see and respond to are immediate. You also have the facility to add photos, videos and information/activities of your own.

As your child joins us we have put together an introduction 'Parent Pack' with information on child development. We have also developed some USB sticks containing more information and links, these can be borrowed on request.

Smooth Transitions

Creating a Smooth Transition to the next setting is paramount to sustaining and developing your child's self confidence. Arriving at the playground on the first day of school even makes parents and carers nervous so using the links we have with our local primary schools we can help the children to become familiar with a new environment and the adults who will eventually be working with them.

All the schools into which we feed arrange induction days and story times. Reception teachers and supporting staff visit the children in their pre-school setting, playing and chatting to them in familiar surroundings, glean information which they then find invaluable when meeting the children again in the classroom.

The Role of the Registering Authority

Regular visits are carried out by the registering body, Ofsted, to inspect the 'care' and the 'curriculum'. Ofsted reports usually include 'actions' for the setting to address. St Michaels Pre-school puts together a Setting Improvement Plan (SIP) which is then evidenced each time we update our Self Evaluation Form (SEF). Ofsted access this online prior to future inspections.

Ofsted would be involved if there were concerns of a child being at risk or where there is a possible breach of registration requirements. An investigation would follow any concerns raised.

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out in the early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interest of the pre-school and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

Ofsted complaints line is 0300 123 4666

Ofsted reports for this setting can be found at
www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports/

How You Can Help Us

Timing

Our sessions begin at 9am each morning and we ask you not to leave your child before that time. The sessions finish at 12pm, 1pm and 3pm on some days.

If you need to speak to a member of staff, then please feel free to do so either before or after pre-school session. Or if you prefer, telephone/email either the Manager or Duty Manager.

Fees

Our fees structure can be found on the enrolment form.

The 'free entitlement' is accessible the term following a child's third birthday. We are registered under the Free for Two scheme for families who qualify. The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is available to 3 and 4 year olds using a similar criteria.

We do ask for prompt payment but please talk to us if there are any difficulties.

If you wish to withdraw your child from pre-school, payment is still required in full for that half term. Payment is also required for a child's absence due to sickness or holidays. However fees for children who are hospitalised will be waived. Action to reclaim non-payment of fees will be pursued when necessary.

Health

It is important for parents to advise the staff of any health problems and all information will be held in confidence. These include any infection illnesses, which may affect other children and staff. Please allow full recovery before returning them to pre-school.

In the event of diarrhoea and/or sickness please allow **48 clear hours** before your child returns to pre-school as advised by the local health authority and with a thoughtful approach towards the other children and staff.

Clothing

In order to feel free to explore and experiment with all kind of materials, including many messy ones, it is best to send your child dressed in clothes which are easily washable or are not too new.

We do have t-shirts, sweatshirts printed with our pre-school logo for anyone who wishes to purchase. Please see notice board for full details.

It is a good for children to practice new skills, which will make them independent. Simple clothing which they can handle themselves will enable them to go to the toilet when they want to and to put on and take off their outdoor clothing without being too dependent on other peoples help. As we access outside play everyday we ask you to provide appropriate foot wear and clothing. ie wellington boots on wet days.

A Final Note

If you need any further information and you feel that you would like your child to attend St Michaels Pre-school please feel free to come in and see us or email/call us.

We look forward to seeing you in the future.