

Dorchester on Thames Pre-School

Horsa Hut
Queen Street
Dorchester-on-Thames
Wallingford
Oxon OX10 7HR Tel:
01865 341805
Email: manager@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk
www.dorchesterpreschool.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 1026090



Manager – Helen Morris

We welcome all children to join our
friendly pre-school.

We have experienced staff to help ease
your child into the world of interactive
play and learning.

Welcome to Dorchester Pre-School

The staff and committee would like to welcome you and your child to Dorchester Pre-School.

We are a small and friendly group, which enables us to give each child more individual attention. We know how important the pre-school years are for a child. They can influence their views and feelings on many aspects of life for years to come, including their future attitude towards school and learning. That is why we treat each child as an equal with individual needs.

Children need the opportunity to explore in a safe and stimulating environment. We have excellent facilities both in the classroom and also in our garden and outdoor play area.

What we offer your child

- A tailored curriculum leading to approved learning goals in communication and language, physical development, personal, social and emotional development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design. This is in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each half term a theme is chosen for the basis of each session.
- Individual care and attention made possible by a high adult/child ratio.
- The support of a key person. Each member of staff is responsible for a small group of children. The key person is in a position to tailor the group's curriculum to the unique needs of each individual child. The key person will gradually introduce structured activities to your child on a one-to-one basis during their time at pre-school.
- The opportunity for you and your family to be directly involved in the activities of the pre-school and in your own child's progress.

Getting Started

A child needs to feel secure and relaxed with the staff and within the pre-school to learn properly so we are keen for you to visit and look around the pre-school with your child before deciding to send him/her. The starting date and the days you choose to send your child will depend upon space and availability according to our admission policy, see page 8. We encourage parents to revisit the pre-school with their child shortly before he/she is due to start so that they are familiar with the group before they come.

Management and Administration

A voluntary committee of parents and carers runs the pre-school. This ensures that major decision-making is in the hands of those who use the group. The committee is responsible for reviewing both policy and practice, for the employment of members of staff, and is actively involved in fundraising. The day-to-day running of the group is in the hands of the manager.

We encourage all existing and new parents to join the committee, enabling them to have a direct influence on the pre-school's progress. Committee meetings are

sociable occasions, held about every half term. Please feel free to attend a meeting just to see what goes on before committing yourself. We keep you up-to-date with the pre-school news through our regular newsletters.

A Typical Day

Morning Sessions

- 9.00am Children arrive and are greeted by a member of staff at the door. They hang up their bag and coat in the cloakroom, then find their name brick and bring it to the book corner. Fruit contributions are put in the fruit basket and show and tell items are put in a special box.
- 9.05am Group time starts with registration and a song to greet the children. We chat about the day ahead and who will be the special helper for the day. The special helper helps with snack time, toy choice and can take our Pre School Bear home for the night. We check the weather, count how many children are here and talk about our show and tell toys from home.
- 9.20am It's off to play and have fun in all early learning areas until 1030am. This will involve topic work, writing, number work, computer, CDs, book corner, construction and free choice areas. Children take turns, involve others and have fun.
- 10.30am Snack time – The special helper helps to prepare for snack time by setting the tables and putting out the children's names to find once they have sung the tidy-up song and washed their hands. They sit together for their snack of fruit and milk.
- 11.00am We head outside in all weather! We are fortunate to have two large play areas, a large sand pit, lots of play equipment, play houses and an outside classroom. In bad weather we can use the Primary School's hall and PE equipment which is a great opportunity for the children to experience different environments and meet other teachers.
- 11.50am The children and staff gather in the book corner to chat about the morning and what they have enjoyed.
- 12.00pm Morning session ends and some children go home.

Lunch Club

- 12.00pm Lunch club runs everyday. The children bring in their own packed lunch, which they eat together with staff at a table talking and listening to music.
- 1.00pm Session ends. Some children go home and some arrive for the afternoon session.

Afternoon Session

- 1.05pm The afternoon session runs to a similar timetable to the morning session with a wide variety of activities on offer.
- 2.25pm Snack time - The children are asked to come and wash their hands prior to a snack of fruit and vegetables and fresh milk.
- 2.35pm Outside play, weather permitting, or whole group activities.
- 3.00pm Home time. The children find their belongings and art work from their drawers. We sing the goodbye song and go home looking forward to doing it again tomorrow!

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

We follow the curriculum guidelines set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was implemented in September 2012 and updated in September 2014.

The four guiding principles of the EYFS 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, parents and carers.

Learning & Development

Children develop and learn 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.

There are three prime areas and four specific areas of Learning & Development. The three prime areas are:

Communication & language

In both large and small groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes.

Physical development

A range of equipment and opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, allows children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their own bodily skills. A very high level of adult supervision enables children safely to create and meet physical challenges, developing increasing skill and control in moving, climbing and balancing. At the same time, children are supported in the development of the fine motor skills required to use tools, including pens and pencils, and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision.

Personal, social & emotional development

Within a nurturing environment, children are individually supported in developing confidence, autonomy and self-respect. They are encouraged to become independent and also to take part in the life of the group sharing and co-operating with other children and adults.

The four specific areas are:

Literacy

Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purposes of writing and, when they are ready, to use drawn and written symbols for themselves. A well-stocked book corner and library gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, able to handle them and aware of their uses for both reference and as a source of stories and pictures.

Mathematics

By means of adult supported practical experience, children become familiar with the sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities, which form the basis for early mathematics. As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems, children are assisted to learn the vocabulary of mathematics, identifying objects by shape, position, size and number. Songs, games and pictures help children become aware of number sequences.

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 their environment, both within the group and also in the wider community. A range of equipment enables children to extend their technological understanding, using simple tools and techniques as appropriate to achieve their intentions and to solve problems.

Expressive Arts & Design

Children are encouraged to use a large range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings and to construct their individual response to experience two and three dimensions. Art equipment, including paint, glue, crayons, and pencils, as well as natural and discarded resources, provides for open-ended exploration of colour, shape and texture and 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.

Policies

The Policies and Procedures are available in full on the website and parents are welcome to ask for a copy.

Equal Opportunities Statement

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, Dorchester Pre-School believes that no child, individual or family should be excluded from the pre-school's activities on the grounds of age, gender, sexuality, status, disability, colour, ethnic origin, culture or belief.

Confidentiality

If parents have any concerns they would like to discuss about their child or the school, they can arrange to see the child's key person or the manager at the end of a session, when we will be able to give our full attention. We do hope you will always feel able to discuss anything with us, however large or small. Naturally, we have the child's happiness at heart and we feel that communication between parents and teachers plays a very important part. We fully comply with the GDPR regulations, further information is available from the manager if needed.

Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety Policy is available for you to see (or have a copy). Please ask a staff member.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

We believe that all children and their families are welcome and that we will help all children to have access to a full curriculum and environment. We are committed to following the requirements of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and the Disability Discrimination Act.

Child Protection

The pre-school is registered under the Children's Act (1989). Under these regulation we are required to notify the necessary authorities of any suspected child abuse, i.e. where a child tells a member of staff or where there is evidence of non-accidental injury.

Behaviour

The pre-school aims to provide an environment which develops a child's positive self- image through praise and by encouragement. The curriculum and structure of the sessions are geared to offer appropriate outlets for the children's energy. The ground rules are realistic and appropriate for the ages and stages of the children attending, and are discussed regularly at group time.

Practical Information

Number of places: Up to 20 in the mornings

Up to 16 in the afternoons

Ages: 2 to 4 years

Staff ratio: 1 adult to 8 children aged 3 – 4 years
1 adult to 4 children aged 2 years

Staff numbers: Up to 4 dependent on the number and ages of the children in the session

Sessions Available: Mornings – every weekday

Afternoons – every weekday Full
day – every weekday Lunch club
– every weekday

A waiting list may be in operation for any of the above sessions.

Hours:	Mornings	9am - 12pm
	Lunch Club	12pm - 1pm
	Afternoons	1pm - 3pm
	Full days	9am – 3pm

Effective 1st September 2019 Fees:

Mornings	£13.80 per session
Lunch club	£4.60 per session
Afternoons	£9.20 per session
Full day	£27.60 per day

The hourly rate for 2 year old children is £5.00 per hour and as such the fees for 2 year olds are:

Mornings	£15 per session
Lunch Club	£5 per session
Afternoons	£10 per session
Full Day	£30 per day

Late collection

This can be distressing for the child waiting for a parent/carer and means staff may need to stay later in order to tidy and set up for the next day. A late collection fee of £5 per 15 minutes will apply.

Payment of fees

Fees are payable termly in advance. Fees continue to be payable if a child is absent from pre-school for any reason as they guarantee her/his place in the group. Each child's attendance at the group is conditional upon continued payment of fees. If you think you may have a problem regarding fees, please speak to the Chairperson or the Treasurer, as assistance may be available.

Oxfordshire County Council funding (up to 30 hours) is available to children in the term after their 3rd birthday. Childcare vouchers are accepted in part or full payment. Please refer to the Government website www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

We would ask you to give the pre-school half a term's notice if your child is leaving, so that we may offer the place to another child. Please see the attached Withdrawal Policy for more details.

Our fees are reviewed annually.

Helpful Information

What to wear

Please bring wellies and a coat for your child for outdoor activities. All items must be clearly named. Many of the activities are messy – we do provide aprons for children when painting, sticking etc., but it is advisable to dress your child in easily washable clothes. Please do not send your child to pre-school in dressing up clothes – there are plenty provided. Please provide a change of clothes for all children and nappies and wipes for the younger children. In hot weather we ask you to bring a sunhat clearly marked with your child's name. If you would like us to apply sun cream in hot weather we ask you to complete a permission form and provide suitable sun lotion, again marked with your child's name. Each child is allocated a peg in the cloakroom where items may be kept.

Being Prepared

- Children are helped to the toilet if they need it. Please let the supervisor know if you have any special requests. Accidents do happen and we are prepared with spare clothing.
- Please tell us if your child has any allergies (see enrolment form) as we have regular cooking sessions in the group and the children often taste the food they have made before they go home. For the same reason, please inform us if they are vegetarian or of any cultural or religious beliefs that we should be aware of.

Lunch Club

Children bring in their own packed lunch, which is placed on a trolley until lunchtime. In the summer or during hot weather we ask you to include a small ice pack. We suggest you include sandwiches, fruit, yoghurt or a small treat and perhaps a drink. We ask that crisps, sweets and large chocolate bars are omitted in line with our healthy eating policy. We request that you cut grapes and small tomatoes in half, and ask that you do not include any nuts (including peanut butter and any sesame products such as hummus), or strawberries as some children have severe allergies to these food types. The children have access to filtered water whenever they require it.

Drawers

Each child is allocated a drawer with his or her name written on it. The drawers are used to collate artwork and other information to be taken home each day by parents / carers. The children soon learn which drawer is theirs and are eager to show their parent / carer the contents at the end of each day. We do encourage parents / carers to check these regularly.

Drop off

It is a very sociable setting but in order to minimise any distraction to the children we would appreciate it if you could drop off children promptly in order that the staff can start registration and circle time without too many distractions.

Collection

Please ensure that your child is brought into the pre-school in the morning and collected from the building at home time. Do let the Manager know if someone other than the usual parent/carer will be collecting your child and they will record this information. Children will not be released to an un-named person without prior notice.

We hope that your child's time with us will be a very happy and productive one. If you have any queries or we can be of any assistance please speak with a member of staff or the committee.

Admissions Policy

Terms of Admission

- Admissions will take place at the beginning of each term and each half term. If spaces are available, children may start mid term. Children are eligible to start pre-school from the date of their 2nd birthday (Children do not need to be dry), and may be accepted up to school starting age.
- Where places are available it is recommended that children should start with minimum of 2 sessions a week in their first term. (Afternoons, being quieter allow staff to spend more time with your child, enabling them to settle in quicker. However, please note that attendance in the afternoon does not guarantee future availability of the morning sessions). We will then endeavour to offer an increasing number of mornings / days each term. This cannot be guaranteed and is based on availability of places at the time. Where demand for morning sessions is high, priority may be given to children who wish to attend the full day.
- Requests for new admissions will be accepted up to 28 days prior to the end of the preceding term. The target for the notification of parents will be 21 days prior to the end of term. If we have an excess of places, we will accept requests for admissions after these deadlines based on a first come first served basis.
- If it is not possible to provide the sessions requested for a particular child an attempt will be made to re-arrange the schedules. If this fails, places may be allotted to a child with higher priority (see details on priority below). Flexibility in requests for sessions is therefore to be encouraged.
- Requests from parents of children currently at pre-school, for changes to sessions for the next term will be sought at the beginning of the preceding half term. At this time the Manager/Administrator will contact the parents of the eldest children to offer, when available, increased number of sessions.
- The Manager/Administrator may then at his/her discretion fill places that remain unused by offering them to the remaining children in order of their age and to new admissions.
- Please contact the Manager/Administrator for all admission enquiries including attending the Lunch Club.
- Please note that a clear half term's notice is required on withdrawing children or reducing the number of sessions per week. If a clear half term's notice is not given, fees for that term will still be payable as it will then be difficult to allocate the place to another child.
- Please note that the catchment area as referred to in this policy is Dorchester-on-Thames, Drayton St Leonard, Burcot, Clifton Hampden and Berinsfield.

Management of Admissions

We will consider requests for admissions and additional places in the following order of priority:

A) Children starting school in the following term:

This group includes all children who will be due to start primary school the following term and are either already at the pre-school or who live within the catchment area. We will endeavour to offer five days if requested but we cannot guarantee this. If there is a shortage of places priority will be given within this group according to date of birth.

B) Additional sessions for existing children:

This group includes children who are already attending the pre-school. Priority will be given within this group according to date of birth.

C) Other new admissions in the catchment area:

This group includes all children who are not about to go to school the following term but do live in the catchment area. Priority will be given in the following order within this group and then according to date of birth within each sub-group.

- i) children living in Dorchester with siblings currently at pre-school
- ii) children living in Dorchester
- iii) children living anywhere else in the catchment area

D) Other new admissions out of catchment area:

This group includes all children who are not in the catchment area. Priority will be given within this group according to proximity to Dorchester followed by date of birth.

Withdrawal/Reduced Number of Sessions Policy

A clear half term's notice is required on withdrawing children or reducing the number of sessions per week.

If you wish your child not to attend all the sessions that have been allocated to them, or to leave pre-school earlier than the end of the following half term, then fees (where applicable) will be payable until the end of the following half term.

This policy applies to:

- Morning and afternoon sessions
- Lunch club

This policy also applies to children when leaving the pre-school to attend the reception class at school.

The pre-school committee may, in exceptional circumstances waive these charges.

The table below shows the latest date for notice of withdrawal or reduced sessions for each half term during the year:

Date of leaving	Notice to be received by:
Autumn half term	Last day of Summer holidays
End of Autumn term	Last day of Autumn half term holiday
Spring half term	Last day of Christmas holidays
End of Spring term	Last day of Spring half term holiday
Summer half term	Last day of Spring (Easter) holidays
End of Summer term	Last day of Summer half term holiday

Contact Details

Manager

Helen Morris 01865 341805

manager@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk

Committee

Chair

Louisa Margison

chair@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk Secretary

Lauren Collett

secretary@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk

Treasurer

Nigel Scott

treasurer@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk

Admissions

Helen Morris – Manager see above or Hayley Poole –
admin@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk Administrator

