

# Welcome to **DORCHESTER** **PRE-SCHOOL**

## Parent Information Guide

We're so happy you've chosen Dorchester Pre-school. This guide has everything you need to know about our setting, how we learn and play and how we work together to give your child the very best start.



*Lets grow. learn and have fun together!*

Helen Morris (Manager)    [manager@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk](mailto:manager@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk)  
01865 341805    [www.dorchesterpreschool.co.uk](http://www.dorchesterpreschool.co.uk)



OFSTED RATED GOOD

'Staff are caring and nurturing, making pupils feel safe and secure.'

Registered Charity Number: 1026090

Ofsted Number: 134311

Member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance

## Meet Our Wonderful Team

### Helen – Preschool Manager

**Role:** Oversees daily operations, compliance, and family communications.

**About Helen:** "I have managed early years settings for over 20 years. My goal is to ensure every child feels safe, loved, and inspired to learn through play."

### Andrea – Deputy Manager & SENDCo

**Role:** Supports the manager and leads Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision.

**About Andrea:** "I am passionate about ensuring every child gets the tailored support they need to bloom."

### Christina – Preschool Assistant

**Role:** Currently studying for her Early Years Level 2, works full time.

**About Christina:** "I love messy play, arts and crafts, and getting children excited about storytelling. Every day is a new adventure!"

### Jess – Preschool Assistant

**Role:** Having worked as bank staff, Jess is joining us this year part time.

**About Jess:** "I focus on building children's confidence, independence, and social skills through fun, hands-on activities."

## Your Child's Key Person

Your child will be assigned a key person who will support them through their journey.

**Individual Care:** They tailor daily activities to match your child's specific interests and needs.

**Strong Bonds:** They build a deep, trusting relationship so your child feels completely secure.

**Tracking Progress:** They observe and record your child's milestones, keeping you updated.

## Key Information

### Arrival & Registration

**Settling In:** Each child is unique. Some settle instantly, while others need a little more time. If you have any worries, please chat with Helen to plan a transition routine that works for your child.

**Be on Time:** Please arrive promptly for your session.

**Morning Drop-off:** Children are welcomed at the door by a member of staff who will support them and help them find their named peg to hang their coat.

**Trolley Items:** Place clearly labelled lunchboxes, morning snacks, and water bottles onto our trolley. In summer months please tick next to your child's name to confirm you have applied all day suncream.

**⚠ Safety Rule:** Please do **not** use plastic bags for your child's belongings due to safety and suffocation risks.

### Snack & Lunch Times

Morning snack is **10:10 am**; afternoon snack is **2:45 pm**.

**Snack Donations:** For the morning, please put a healthy, labelled snack (e.g. fruit, breadsticks) into our snack box. For the afternoon, leave a labelled snack inside their lunchbox.

**Lunch Club (12:00 pm – 1:00 pm):** Children staying for lunch need a packed lunch. We provide milk or water. We promote healthy eating, so please save crisps, chocolate, sweets, and cakes for special occasions at home.

**⚠ Safety Rules:**

**Choking Hazards:** Grapes, cherry tomatoes, and olives **MUST BE CUT IN HALF**.

**Allergies:** We are a strict **NO NUTS and NO SESAME/HUMMUS** setting.

### Prohibited Parking

- **School Gates:** You **must not** park on the zig-zag lines in front of the main school gates. It is strictly prohibited, illegal, and dangerous for the children.
- **Boundary Wall:** For safety reasons, please do not climb or allow children to climb over the wall surrounding the preschool.

## Key Information

### Clothes & Weather

**Play Clothes:** Please dress your child in clothes that can get messy! Save dressing-up outfits for our designated charity days—we have plenty of dressing-up clothes here.

**Labelling:** Every item of clothing must be clearly named.

**Spare Kit:** Send a change of clothes to stay on your child's peg. This must be in a fabric drawstring bag (strictly no plastic carrier bags).

**Nappies & Wipes:** Keep these in a separate bag (no plastic bags) and keep us updated on your child's toilet training progress.

### Dress for the Weather:

- **Wet days:** Wellies or outdoor play shoes, plus indoor shoes to change into.
- **Cold days:** Coat, hat, scarf, and gloves.
- **Hot days:** A named sun hat and suncream. **Please apply suncream before arriving and tick your child's name** off on our sheet at the door to confirm it is applied.
- **Severe Weather Closures:** Check your email and Whatsapp group regularly for emergency closures.

### Illness & Medication

**Staying at Home:** If your child was unwell the previous evening, please do not send them to preschool. We are unable to administer over counter medicines.

**48-Hour Rule:** Children must stay home for **48 hours after their last bout** of sickness or diarrhoea.

**Reporting Absence:** Please let us know as soon as possible if your child is off sick.

 **Phone:** 01865 341805

**Illness at Preschool:** If your child becomes unwell here, we will check their temperature, cool them down if needed, and call you immediately for collection.

**Prescription Medication:** If your child requires medicine during the day for other health reasons, speak to **Helen**. We can only administer medication that features a formal doctor's prescription and a named pharmacy label.

## Communication

### Newsletters & Communications

**Updates:** We send updates, notices, and event updates via Whatsapp and/or email. Each term, we will send a newsletter outlining our themes and dates for the diary.

**Keep us updated:** It is vital that we have your correct emergency phone numbers and addresses. Please email or tell Helen immediately if your details change.

## Fees & Early Years Grants

### 2-Year-Old Funding

**Means-Tested Grants:** If you receive certain benefits, you may qualify for a grant. Please provide us with your code.

### 3 & 4-Year-Old Funding

**Universal 15 Hours:** Every child is entitled to 15 hours of free childcare per week, the term *after* your child turns 3.

### 2,3,4-Year-old Working Parents 30 Hours Funding:

Working parents may be eligible for up to 30 hours of free childcare per week. Please provide us with your code.

Apply online at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

### Hourly Fees

**2-Year-Olds:** £6.80 per hour

**3 & 4-Year-Olds:** £6.50 per hour

### Invoicing & Payments

Invoices are issued via email at the beginning of each term. Invoices for Early drop are issued at the end of each month. Full payment is due 2 weeks from the date the invoice is issued. Please note that charges will apply for any late payments.

**Tax-Free Childcare:** Working parents can set up an online childcare account via GOV.UK. For every £8 you deposit, the government adds a £2 top-up to pay your fees. You can use this simultaneously alongside your 30 hours funding. Learn more and sign up at [www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare](http://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare).

## Our Volunteer Management Committee

### Who We Are

Dorchester Preschool is a registered charity run by a Committee made up of volunteers.

**Chair:** Leads the committee & oversees meetings

**Treasurer:** Prepares the Preschool's budget and pays staff

**Secretary:** Handles agendas and meeting minutes

**Committee Members:** Make decisions regarding Preschool needs & purchases, and organise fundraising events.

### Where Our Funding Comes From

As a charity, the money we receive goes directly back into providing resources for your children. Our income relies on three core areas:

- **Parent Fees**
- **Early Years Grants**
- **Fundraising & Donations**

### We Need You: Join Our Committee!

Because we are a community-run charity, preschool cannot legally operate without a minimum number of committee members. If we do not have enough volunteers to fill these roles, the preschool faces the very real risk of closure.

- **No experience needed**
- **Flexible commitment:** Meetings are once a term, and tasks are shared based on availability.
- **Make a difference:** It is a wonderful way to have a say in your child's early education, make new friends, and organize fun fundraising events.

### Support Your Child's Preschool

Whether you can bake a cake for a fundraiser, help at an event, or step into a committee role, your support keeps our doors open.

**Please chat with Helen or email us today if you can help!**