



Parents Information Book

Monday, Wednesday and Fridays 9.15am – 12pm
Lunch club 12-12.30pm
(Term time only)

The Village Hall
Bethesda Street
Upper Basildon
Berkshire
RG8 8ES

Telephone: 01491 672409
(During sessions only)

www.playstart.co.uk

Supervisor: Debbie Addison
Staff: Julie Barker, Alison Hudson, Yvonne Bates, Tara Simmons

Registration Secretary: Julie Barker
Telephone: 01491 671134

Welcome to Play Start Group. In this information book, we have compiled some information about our group.

We provide child care aimed at rising 18 months to five year olds. We aim for every child attending Play Start to:

- gain social skills in turn taking, sharing and respect for others,
- increase their confidence, self esteem and self expression,
- improve fine manipulation and movement skills,
- develop an awareness of books,
- achieve a basic understanding of the world around them
- and most importantly develop a 'will to learn'.

Within the group setting the children are free to explore music using sounds and rhythm, simple songs, movement to music; action songs, playing instruments and dance. Role play is encouraged using a large selection of home play toys and construction toys. Creativity is fostered through cookery, art and craft, sand, water, play dough. Book appreciation is encouraged as well as first mathematical and natural scientific concepts, and both outdoor and indoor physical play.

Accreditation

Play Start is an Ofsted registered organisation. Our sessions are planned to meet the requirements for high quality care. Our registration permits a maximum of 24 children per session.

In September 2008, Ofsted introduced new legislation for childcare covering the ages of 0-5 years, called Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

One of the main changes for Play Start is that EYFS requires us to make and record observations of all of the children in our care to ensure we implement appropriate development plans for each of them. Parents are entitled to view these records, and anyone wishing to do so should speak to a member of staff.

Where a child attends more than one childcare provider, (e.g. Sparklers) Play Start are encouraged to communicate with them directly so that a comprehensive view of the child can be achieved. In addition when your child leaves Play Start and moves onto the next stage of his/her education you will be given a copy of this file to pass onto your new childcare provider.

Play Start is also registered with the Pre School Learning Alliance and follows their policies and guidelines on good practice. Our policies and procedures are available during sessions for those wishing to access them.

Charitable Status

Play Start is a registered Charity and the group **welcomes any donations** and help with fund raising activities/events, which we run throughout the academic year. Funds raised help to buy equipment and meet running costs. **Support from parents is an essential part of our success**, and without this the group would be unable to

function. Our committee members are parents and staff, past and present, who have volunteered to support the group. The committee meets once a month in term time. Volunteer's, contributions suggestions and feedback are most welcome.

Facilities

Play Start meets in the Bruton Hall, within the Village Hall in Upper Basildon, located in Bethesda Street.

During the session the group has access to designated, safe and secure indoor and outdoor play equipment in line with safety standards. The outdoor play area includes play bark and play sand. We are also planning to develop an outdoor planting and gardening skills area for the warmer months. We provide outdoor play or nature walks most days – weather permitting. Children need to be provided with **clean wellies and suitable clothing including sun hats**, to help staff plan effectively for outdoor activities.

For the safety of the children no hot drinks are permitted during sessions.

Children have access to toilet facilities and are accompanied by a member of staff who has been CRB checked. When necessary staff will change soiled nappies and wet clothing. Nappy changing facilities are available; but soiled nappies should be taken from the premises. **Please provide nappies or pants and spare clothes in a named bag.**

Staff

A qualified supervisor and deputy lead each session. There will always be the correct number of staff or more to meet required ratios. All staff are regularly Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checked.

Sessions

Sessions run on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.15am to 12.00pm. With an optional lunch club from 12-12.30pm. They are planned in line with legal curriculum requirements in the United Kingdom, incorporating the Early Years Foundation Stage (2008) for childcare from birth to 5 years of age.

The Foundation stage refers to six areas of learning and development critical during pre school years. These are personal and emotional development, mathematics, physical development, communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development.

An overview of our long-term plan is centred around meeting these critical areas of learning, based on the activities linked to themes across the year. The themes may run for approximately 3 weeks and include topics such as: Transport, Houses, People who help us, Christmas, About Me, Food, Clothes, Colours, Spring, Mini Beasts, Seashore, Water etc.

A typical Play Start session

- 9.15am** Arrival – free flow play with sand, water, dough, jigsaw, puzzles, construction, toys, drawing and colouring in a choice of media.
- 10.00am** Theme based activities in specific areas around the room, children free to move between activities.
- 10.50am** Bell – Tidy up time, sit together on the mat for story/song time.
- 11.10am** Hand wash and healthy snack time. Counting and names.
- 11.25am** Outdoor play/nature walk (weather permitting) or further indoor playgroup games, ring games and physical activities.
- 12pm** Register and goodbyes for non lunch club children.
- 12.05pm** Lunch Club children eat their packed lunch around the table.
- 12.30pm** Goodbyes for Lunch Club children.

Lunch Club

We offer an optional lunch club at a cost of £2. Lunch club runs from the end of the session (12pm) until 12.30pm. If you would like your child to attend lunch club please tick the appropriate boxes on the registration form. Please provide a packed lunch for your child. Unfortunately, we cannot provide refrigeration facilities so please bear this in mind when choosing food options or pack a small cool block or frozen drink bottle on hot days.

Parents and Carers of 18 months – 2 year olds

Under the terms of our insurance, parents/carers of 18 months- 2 year olds must be responsible for their own child. This includes supervising activities, nappy changing or toilet trips, dressing and undressing of coats, hats, wellies etc. All parents and carers must switch off their mobile phones.

Please leave Play Start staff to deal with any issues not involving your child as they may have special instructions from the parents.

Registration

There is a registration form attached to this booklet that we require all parents to complete and sign before a child can start. Please hand the form to the Supervisor or post it to the registration secretary (address on the form) with your registration fee cheque. The registration fee includes a Play Start sweatshirt for you child. We will confirm the days we can offer your child a place and the amount due for that term. Please pay within 5 days of receiving an offer of a place to guarantee that place is held for you.

We operate a first come, first served admissions policy.

Fees

Our fees are £9.75 per session, per child for under 2s (who attend with a parent or carer) and £10.50 per session, per child for over 2s (free for 3 and 4 year olds – see below) and £2 for lunch club.

We will notify you of any changes in fees though a parents' newsletter. Our fees are payable half termly in advance, and are due in the first week of term or within 1 week of joining.

Please settle promptly as we are entirely self-funded and need to pay staff and rent. Payment by instalments is also possible – please speak to the treasurer. Our policy for holidays is that you will still have to pay for your session/s as we still have to pay our staff and the rent, as the place can not be offered as a one off to another child.

If fees remain unpaid for more than half a term your child's place will be offered to someone else and we will take action to recover the outstanding monies including fees due in lieu of notice.

If you would like your child to attend an extra session, please speak to the Registration Secretary or Supervisor to check that there is a place available. We will then put a note of the extra fees due in your child's box.

We can offer a limited number of assisted places to those who may have difficulty paying some or all of their fees. Please call the Treasurer. Any request is treated in the strictest confidence.

Early Years Education Funding

We offer three and four year olds funded sessions. Your child becomes eligible for their free Government Early Years Education Funded place from the start of the school term after their third birthday. For more information about the scheme please visit

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Preschooldevelopmentandlearning/NurseriesPlaygroupsReceptionClasses

Notice of Leaving

We require **half a term's written notice** of your child leaving the group, or fees in lieu of notice will be charged.

Attendance

If for some reason your child cannot attend a session, **please phone 01491 672409** at the beginning of the session. If we do not hear from you for 4 weeks we will offer your place to another child on the waiting list.

Sickness

If your child has sickness or diarrhoea we ask that you keep him/her away from Play Start for 48 hours following the last episode. If your child has a contagious disease or head lice please inform the supervisor so we can warn other parents to be aware.

First Aid Emergencies

If your child has a minor accident we administer first aid and record the incident in our First Aid Log. We will tell you or the child's carer about it when the child is collected, and ask for a signature in the book. If there is a more serious accident we will take immediate steps to gain medical attention and contact you or the child's carer.

Discipline

We do not administer any kind of physical punishment. If a child's behaviour becomes unacceptable we will first tell them what they should be doing, then try to move them on to an alternative activity. If appropriate, a member of staff will take the child to a quiet place for a short "time out," and remain with the child until they have settled down.

Safety and Security

Please arrive promptly at the start of the session so that the supervisor can start on time. The door to the Village Hall is secured after sessions start for security reasons – please ring the doorbell for attention.

We need to know who is authorised to collect your child at the end of each session. Please complete a collection slip if you are authorising someone else to collect your child and give to a member of staff.

If you are delayed coming to collect your child at the end of the session please ring 01491 671395 to let us know, so the supervisor can explain to your child when they will be collected. Having to supervise uncollected children is a problem for the staff as it means they cannot finish packing away before leaving time.

Staff may impose a fine on persistent late collectors: £5 after the first 15 minutes, increasing by £5 for each additional 15 minutes.

Please be very alert as you drive your vehicle into the Village Hall car park. It would be helpful if parents/carers arriving early to collect their child could wait until just before the finish time before coming into the hall entrance, particularly if the children are still playing outside.

Equal Opportunities

We welcome children from all ethnic groups, religion, gender and needs. We try to reflect the multi-cultural nature of our society through our toys, the books we use and the activities we arrange.

We very much appreciate parental support to help us understand where any child may need some extra support in adjusting to language or cultural changes.

Special Education Needs

We have experience in working with children with medical or special needs and have a SEN policy and SENCO (Special Education Needs Coordinator). We work closely with the local Learning Support team to help those who may need extra resources, e.g. a dedicated member of staff.

If you have any concerns about the development of your child or any issues you would like to discuss in confidence, please talk to the supervisor. A little extra support at an early stage can make a huge difference to a child and we are very committed to helping every child make the most of Play Start.

Diet and Allergies

Please let us know if your child has any diet concerns or allergies. We usually offer milk/water at elevenses, and the children have a healthy snack. If your child needs to bring their own snacks, please make sure the container is clearly marked with their name.

Communications

Good communication is essential for the parents, staff and the committee. There are a number of routes we use:

- Each child has a box that is put in the entrance hall at the end of the session, into which the “take home” items are placed along with any newsletters (we write one or two a term), messages etc for parents. Please check your child’s box before you go.
- If you have any concerns or complaints, please raise them with the supervisor or chair. On the other hand if you feel that the staff have done a good job, please let them know this as well – ***praise is one of their major rewards.***
- We also have a notice board inside the hall on which we display term dates, photos of activities and general information.

Annual General Meeting

We have an Annual General Meeting in the autumn term. Under our constitution we have to have one third of all families who attend the group represented at the AGM, so please make a diary note when the date of the AGM is posted and come along.

Complaints

We hope that any issues you may have can be resolved by raising the matter with the supervisor or chair of the committee. If you would like to formalise your complaint please complete a complaint form. We will then carry out an investigation of your complaint and keep you informed throughout. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this process you can contact Ofsted on 08456 404040 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. All complaints and feedback are held in the complaints record log which can be viewed at any time.

Fundraising and Donations

We are a small charitable group who can only thrive with the support of all our parents.

We set our fees as low as possible to just cover staff costs, rent and some materials to make sure we are as affordable as possible. As a consequence we have to fund raise about £1000.00 each year to cover the cost of new equipment and materials. We know that for many of you lack of time prevents you from helping with fundraising so please consider making a direct donation. This can be done by rounding up or adding a donation to your fees cheque.

Running the Group

A committee of parents and staff run the group. We are a small group and can only thrive if many of our parents are willing to give up some of their time to make things happen and ensure we meet our obligations.

In addition to the officers – Chair, Secretary and Treasurer – we need at least four committee members who are willing to take on the odd jobs as they arise or can help with fundraising events. We meet once a month in one of our houses, generally from 8pm-10pm. If you would like to get involved either as a committee member or as someone who can help out with the odd jobs, please talk to a committee member or a member of staff – any assistance is welcome.

Finally

If you have any questions please ask. If you would like to come along to a session to see what is going on, your first session will be **free**, please call Julie Barker on 01491 671134, Julie can then let the supervisor know when to expect you.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to the group.

Committee members

Chair	Stacey Kremer	07974 659745
Deputy Chair	Sarah Salmon	07979 755667
Secretary	Sarah Martin	07773 451563
Treasurer	Jane Prodhan	01491 671420
Registrations	Julie Barker	01491 671134
Fundraising	Emma Arbuckle	07771 592011
Other Committee	Annie Wye and Rebecca James	

If you would like to register or arrange a free session with your child, please contact our Registration Secretary, Julie Barker on 01491 671134.