



Heathwood Pre-School

PROSPECTUS

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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Heathwood Pre-School. We hope that your child will start their exciting educational journey with us and this booklet aims to answer some of your questions and to convey our commitment to the learning, development and well-being of all the children in our care. We welcome visits to our Pre-School so if you would like to come and meet our staff and children during session times please phone or email to arrange a convenient time.



Our Contact details

Telephone: 01525 377096
Email: preschool@heathwood.beds.sch.uk
Website information: www.heathwoodlower.com

Our Staff Team

Elaine Dicocco, Pre-School Manager & Early Years Lead
Natalie Alexander, Early Years Practitioner (Shared Deputy)
Davina Sweetman, Early Years Practitioner (Shared Deputy)
Sara Kingslake, Early Years Practitioner

All staff are safeguarding trained and have a strong knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We are passionate about assisting the children in their development and progress within education.

Our Pre-School aims

- To provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age
- To work in partnership with parents to help their children learn and develop
- To provide a fun, safe, secure and stimulating environment in which children can learn through play
- To add to the life and well-being of the local community
- To offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity
- To support all our children in the transition to school



Our Session Times

Monday - Friday (Term Time only)

Morning session 09.00 am - 12.00 pm

Afternoon session 12.20 pm - 3.20 pm

All day flexible provision 9.00am - 3.20pm
(lunchtime forms part of this).

The sessions

We organise our sessions so that the children can choose from, and work at, a range of activities and, in doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small group activities which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others.

Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them. The children have the opportunity, and are encouraged, to take part in outdoor child-chosen and adult-led activities, as well as those provided indoors. The Pre-School offers a free-flow play environment where the children can access both the indoor and outdoor environment in equal measure throughout the session (it has to be particularly bad weather for our doors to remain closed!).



For children who stay with us all day, the sessions are organised so that children can take part in a variety of child-chosen and adult-led activities. These take account of children's changing energy levels throughout the day. The setting caters for children's individual needs for rest and quiet activities during the day.

The setting's timetable and routines

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

- help each child to feel that they are a valued member of the setting
- ensure the safety of each child
- help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group
- provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning

Snacks and meals

Snacks and meals are a social time, we provide a rolling morning and afternoon snack each day. There is a choice of milk or water to drink and a choice of fruit to eat. At certain times other food will be available according to our themes and celebrations. Please do tell us about your child's dietary needs so that we can make sure that these needs are met. Children who stay all day can be provided with a healthy packed lunch from home or enjoy a hot meal provided by the school kitchen. Lunchtime sessions are charged at £3.30 regardless of lunch choice as we have to provide staffing to match ratios. Members of the Pre-School staff support the children during lunch each day and often sit with them to ensure lunchtime is a social and learning time, talking about manners and guiding the children to use a knife and fork.



Key persons and your child

Each child is given a key person when they start Pre-School. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that we provide the right activities for your child's particular needs and strengths. They will then work with children providing fun learning in small key worker groups. When your child first starts with us, their key person will help them to settle and throughout your child's time with us they will help your child to benefit from our activities. The key person is responsible for collecting key information, but the whole team will work together to ensure that we have a fair, holistic view of your child within Pre-School.

We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment
- is given generous care and attention, through our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as volunteer parent helpers
- has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together
- builds on what he/she already knows and can do so that learning and development takes place

- has a key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress
- is in an environment where parents are partners in helping their child to learn and develop
- is in an environment where parents help to shape the service it offers

Our staff also undertake some designated co-ordinator roles such as SENDCo, (Special Educational Needs and Disability, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities and 2 year Co-ordinator).

Admissions

You can register your interest in our Pre-School at any point by filling in a New Starter form available from the school office or from the website (www.heathwoodlower.com). This form will be held in the Pre-School until your child is eligible to start.

We accept children from 2½ years of age regardless of whether they are toilet trained.

Fees

We are registered to receive Nursery Education Funding and your child will be eligible to receive this from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. This is equivalent to 15 hours per week and free at the point of delivery. A funding form will be given to you in the first week of term and we ask that you complete and return this on the same day. Extended funding is available for those who meet the criteria. For more information, please visit <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/professionals/three-four-year-old-funding/free.aspx>

There is also funding available for some 2½ year olds if their parents meet the criteria and information on this is available at the local children's centre where they will be happy to help (01525 384368) or go online to <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/professionals/two-year-old-funding/free.aspx>.

Fees for any non-funded sessions are charged at £12 per session which is payable by three monthly instalments per term. Invoices will be sent out on a termly basis and can be paid for by cash, cheque, childcare vouchers or bank transfers. Fees are still payable during short absences from Pre-School; details are in our Terms and Conditions document which also gives further information on notice periods, bad weather sickness and holidays. You will be asked to sign and return a copy of this document to Pre-School. If your child

has to be absent over a long period of time, please talk to the Pre-School manager.

Educational Programme

Our sessions are planned around the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This curriculum covers children from birth until their fifth birthday and follows them through the Reception year. The EYFS has seven areas of learning and we plan activities for the children based around them. Practitioners plan for the individual needs of each child by observing them through child initiated activities and adult initiated activities, captured as they play. We also think about not only *what* they learn, but *how* they learn and the best way to guide this. The seven areas of learning are split up as follows:

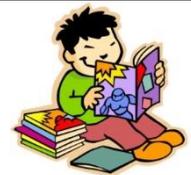
★ **Three prime areas** - The prime areas are important because they lay the foundations to be successful in all areas of learning and of life.

They are essential for healthy development and future learning. These are the areas on which we place primary focus to help children develop independence and become good communicators.

🎯 **Four specific areas** - The specific areas gives the range of experiences and opportunities to broaden their knowledge and skills.

All these areas are interconnected using the unique Child Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Area of learning	This area of learning is about how we...
★ Communication and Language (CL) 	Listen and pay attention Understand what is being said Communicate with others Develop vocabulary and speech
★ Physical Development (PD) 	Move and use gross motor skills Develop fine motor skills Learn about healthy lifestyles Manage self-care independently

★ Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) 	Are confident and self-assured Manage our feelings and behaviour Make friends Share and takes turns
🎯 Literacy (L) 	Enjoy Books Like making marks Join in singing songs/ rhymes Talk about books and what might happen
🎯 Mathematics (M) 	Learn about numbers and counting Explore shapes, space, measures, capacity, opposites etc Recognise the passing of time
🎯 Understanding the World (U) 	Find out about nature and the world around us Talk about people and our community Learn about similarities and differences Learn to confidently use ICT equipment
🎯 Expressive Arts and Design (EAD) 	Enjoy being creative Play imaginatively Sing, make music, dance and explore musical instruments Use colour to express ourselves

Learning through play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Children learn best when they are actively involved in something they enjoy. Our setting uses the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development which we call 'playful learning.' We cover different topics each half term allowing the areas of the EYFS

curriculum to be covered in a way that is relevant to young children. Our play also uses the knowledge we gather from the children's observations to plan for their individual learning needs.

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations to document their progress and where this may be leading them. This information is then used to form the children's next steps in learning. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask parents to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they see them developing.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our on-going development records. These form part of children's on line journals. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as at times of transition, such as when a child moves to a different setting or when they go on to school.

Learning Journals

The Pre-School keeps an on-line learning journal for each child. We encourage our children's parents to work together with us on their child's learning and progress. We will send home (via email) certain observations and photographs of your child's learning, development and interests during each half-term. As parents, you can contribute to their learning journal by sending back information to us about what they have been interested in, what they have shared with you and any new developments in their life. This helps to build the whole picture of your child and also enables us to plan appropriate activities which will motivate and develop them further. In this way we aim to work in partnership with parents, provide for their well-being and celebrate their achievements together.



Parents' Role in Pre-School

Our setting recognises parents as the first and most enduring educators of their children. All of the staff view themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their child. There are many ways in which

parents take part in making the setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- Exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff.
- Completing the required documentation for starting Pre-School.
- Sharing their own special interests with the children.
- Joining in community activities in which the setting takes part.
- Building friendships with other parents in the setting.

Parents can offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children. If you have any links within the wider community such as police, fire-fighters, nurses, artists or shopkeepers and could arrange a visit the children would benefit greatly and really enjoy it. Also if you (or someone you know) have skills in other areas that would benefit the children; just pop in and let us know ... we welcome parents dropping into a session to join in and support 'playful learning'.

Starting at our Pre-School

The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us and we treat each child as an individual, so settling into Pre-School will be a different experience for each child. To make sure that this is the case, the staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into our setting. You are encouraged to have a visit session with your child before they are due to start. We will send you a 'Starting Pre-School' pack which you can return to us on or before their first day with us. This provides us with information to help us provide the care that is best suited to your child. Our goal is for your child to make new friends, have lots of fun and enjoy the time that they are with us.



We hope that you and your child decide to join Heathwood Pre-School
we hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our setting
and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and
stimulating. The Pre-School team are always ready and willing to
talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.