



# St Mark's Pre-School Prospectus

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[www.stmarkspreschool.info](http://www.stmarkspreschool.info)

## Our Inspiration...

The inspiration for St Mark's Pre-School is to create a setting that improves further on even outstanding nursery practices. It has also been influenced by Forest School principles. With our nursery location and surrounding area in mind, we think St Mark's Pre-School makes an ideal setting for Forest School activities.

The philosophy of Forest School is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences. It originates from a concept established in Denmark in the 1980s. Today Forest School principles are beginning to influence the environment and learning style adopted in modern nurseries and has demonstrated that through outdoor play, children have the opportunity to learn about the natural environment. It is engaging with the surrounding area and the ethos about taking the reflective child led approach that really appeals to us.

Children need time to explore their thoughts, feelings and relationships. St Mark's Pre-School allows for time spent experiencing play and learning in the natural outdoor environment. It is this time and reflective practice that develops understanding of the world, the environment and everything within it through the use of emotions, imagination and senses.

## What do we offer?

- Up to 30 places available for children aged 2 years to 5 years
- Modern building, clean & safe environment, 2 outdoor play areas
- A rural, out of town location with ample parking
- Experienced, qualified staff with a real passion for quality childcare
- We offer a choice of either mornings or morning with afternoons. Monday - Friday 9.00am - 12.15pm, or extended sessions on Monday - Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm, 38 weeks of the year

- Forest School principals, child led giving children continuous access to outdoor play
- Ofsted registered, operating to EYFS educational standards

### **Our setting...**

St Mark's Pre-School consists of a single room, accommodating up to 30 children aged 2 - 5 years. The room is decorated to create a clean, warm and relaxing environment with carpeted flooring throughout. Children are able to play freely with traditional and educational wooden toys, puzzles and equipment. There are plenty of materials for arts and crafts, dressing up clothes and books. At St Mark's Pre-School there is no shortage of things for our children to play and learn with. We have successfully defined a number of areas inside the pre-school to establish a range of fun and educational activities for the children. These include:

### **A place for messy play**

In our messy play area, children have the opportunity to play with all things messy, including moulding play dough and clay, spraying foam, finger and hand painting. In the area we also make available model making materials in the form of recycled household items that children can use their imagination to build their creations.

### **A place to explore**

Our construction area features a selection of wooden toys including building blocks, Lego, wooden garage with cars, fully working farm, a construction site complete with crane, digger and trucks and a wooden dolls house. There are also cars, threading beads and puzzles to enjoy.

### **A place to imagine**

The home area allows the chance for role play. With dressing up clothes, a children's kitchen, full length mirrors, a variety of dolls and strollers, children have the chance to play and pretend. This area is often changed to become a hospital, a shop or even a hair salon, giving the children opportunity to explore role play in a variety of environments.

### **Cosy corner and book corner**

With warm and cosy carpet underfoot, the cosy corner provides children the chance to relax with comfortable children's cushions. Numerous books and puzzles are available allowing for some quiet time.

### **A place for mark making**

Our mark making area is full of resources for our children to select and enjoy. Pens, pencils, crayons, glitter, glue, felt tips and chinks can be used on a variety of paper and card.

### **A place for Information Technology (IT)**

Our nursery provides full access to a laptop. Set up for children's software, running interactive DVDs and games, children have the opportunity to use and learn about new technology.

### **A place for outdoor play**

Outside we have two play areas. To the back of the pre-school we back onto neighbouring fields housing chickens, guinea fowl and sheep enclosed by a wooden fence. Our garden is mostly laid to lawn and provides ample room for a wooden trim trail, the opportunity to experience sand and water play, digging pit and sand pit to experience as well as a wooden playhouse. To the side, an enclosed concrete area provides for space to play with ride on toys and enjoy ball games. We also have fruit and vegetable planters, growing and picking fresh fruit and vegetables before preparing them for the children's snacks or some other fabulous recipe.

### **Our staff...**

When employing new staff we take them through a rigorous interview process, seeking at least two references and undertaking both an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check and a health check. As importantly, we also ensure that our staffs shares the same beliefs and values, attitude and enthusiasm with regards to their outlook towards childcare.

St Mark's Pre-School is managed by a team of highly qualified, experienced, caring and friendly staff. The Manager is degree level qualified in Childcare and Education, is our SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator Officer), DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and Health and Safety officer and has had many years' experience in all aspects of working with children. This ensures the highest level of care for your children, which we will sustain at all times in the future of the pre-school. We also actively encourage on-going staff development to ensure we adopt current understanding and practices, such as First Aid, Risk Assessment and Child Protection.

Motivated, happy and committed staffs are vital to delivering the kind of unhurried, attentive and respectful care we expect from our staff. We make it our priority to ensure our staffs shares the same values and beliefs that we do with regards to their approach and level of care for the children.

## **Meet the team:**

**Manager      Miss Lorraine Green**

**Degree in Early Childhood and Education  
Forest School Leadership Level 3  
SENCO (Special Educational Needs Officer)  
DSL (Designed Safeguarding Lead)  
Health and Safety Officer  
Paediatric First Aid  
Mountain and Outdoor First Aid  
Food Safety and Hygiene**

**Deputy Manager   Mrs Nicole Odam**

**NNEB Level 3  
DSL (Designed Safeguarding Lead)  
Forest School Leadership Level 3  
Paediatric First Aid  
Mountain and Outdoor First Aid  
Food Safety and Hygiene**

**Early Years Practitioner   Mrs Sarah Dobson**

**Higher National Diploma  
Paediatric First Aid  
Mountain and Outdoor First Aid  
Food Safety and Hygiene**

**Early Years Practitioner   Miss Marisa Knight**

**Paediatric First Aid  
Food Safety and Hygiene**

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is delivered through planned play activities to help ensure that all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential and experience the best possible start to their education. The EYFS sets out seven 'Areas of Learning and Development' and together these make up the skills, knowledge and experiences appropriate for children as they grow, learn and develop. They are:

### **Prime areas of learning:**

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**

This Prime area of learning includes skills such as taking turns, sharing, beginning to form friendships, self-care skills such as dressing and undressing independently, washing hands after toileting and recognising different emotions in themselves and others. These are fundamental life skills but ones that often need a lot of practice!

#### **Communication and Language:**

We provide a communication rich environment with lots of areas that encourage children to talk to each other and the adults in pre-school. It is important that children expand their vocabulary and learn to speak in more complex sentences. Activities such as singing nursery rhymes, acting out stories and role-play also develop children's language skills. We give children ample opportunity to tell us and their peers about their achievements and what they've been up to at home.

#### **Physical Development:**

Physical Development includes a vast array of skills including body awareness and spatial awareness in addition to developing different ways of moving, increasing body strength and co-ordination and using apparatus and sports equipment including bikes, scooters and climbing frames. Physical Development also plays an important part in preparing children for writing. By developing upper body strength and body control, children will become more steady writers. Children also need to develop fine motor skills and strength in their hands and their fingers to help with pencil grip, using scissors and other 'fiddly finger' activities.

### **Specific areas of learning:**

#### **Literacy:**

At St Mark's Pre-School we aim to foster a love of books and a love of reading. Through daily stories as a whole class, individually and in small groups we ensure that children learn the basic book handling skills needed for reading and a solid understanding of how stories are structured. You will often find children in our nursery independently reading books!

We encourage mark making and emergent writing of all kinds using whatever material the children choose. This could be paints, crayons, pens, giant outdoor chalks or shaving foam!

We learn how to make the basic shapes needed for letter formation through dance and large equipment before we try and achieve it on a small scale.

Children's listening and sound discrimination skills are also developed through our daily phonics work.

### **Mathematics:**

Mathematical work is included in our daily life at St Mark's Pre-School and we practice our counting and calculating skills every day! We count how many children are in our Pre-school, learn our days of the week and sing number rhymes. We also often search for numbers and shapes in our learning environment and make the most of our lovely pre-school grounds.

### **Understanding of the World:**

We love exploring the world around us and how it works. At St Mark's Pre-School we love the question 'why?' We make the most of our grounds to learn about the natural world as well as the man made environment. We make the most of children's natural curiosity and follow their interests to ensure their questions are answered.

### **Expressive Arts and Design:**

Music, art, construction and crafts are a big part of our day and we encourage children to select the materials they see fit to develop their pictures and models. We sing every day and we teach children how to play basic instruments in addition to letting them use them independently—and letting children discover what other items make good instruments! We construct models out of junk in addition to making large scale creations out of bricks, and large cardboard boxes!

**The Prime areas are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other areas. The Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. Together they provide a balanced nursery curriculum.**

### **The EYFS Progress Check at Two**

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that parents and carers must be supplied with a short written summary of their child's development in the three prime learning and development areas of the EYFS when the child is between 24-36 months. The EYFS sets the standards for development, learning and care all registered early years providers are required to follow the framework from September 2012.

- The aim of this progress check is to ensure parents have a clear picture of their child's development.

- It enables practitioners to understand the child's needs and plan activities to meet them in the setting.
- To enable parents to understand the child's needs and with the support from practitioners enhance development at home.
- Note areas where child is progressing well and identify any areas where progress is less than expected and:
- Describe actions the provider intends to take to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate).

### **Records of achievements**

The pre-school keeps a record of achievement for each child using Tapestry. Tapestry records achievements and are one of the ways in which the pre-school and parents work in partnership. Your child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Tapestry records all information that your child's key person or parents enter. Before your child/children start with us parents complete an extensive "About Me" on Tapestry that will include information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information gives your child's key person a valuable insight on your child before they start with us and also throughout their journey with us.

### **Security...**

Security is imperative in a pre-school setting. We have implemented the following security features at St Mark's Pre-School to ensure utmost security for our children

- Parent/carer registers are maintained and established to ensure children are collected by only those individuals we have recorded. In the event that an unregistered person needs to collect a child(ren) we ensure a password is in place to verify that individual has been approved by the parent/carer.
- All staff have completed enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Ofsted approved policies and procedures are in place for your child(ren)'s safety, welfare and wellbeing.

### **Policies and procedures...**

We encourage all our parents/carers to read our policies and procedures, as they have been implemented to ensure safe and secure running of our pre-school for children, staff, parents/carers. All our policies and procedures are located on the parents/carers table in a labelled file, which is made continuously available for parents/carers to view. We always ensure parents/carers are made aware of any changes or updates to our policies and procedures.

## Complaints and Feedback

St Mark's Pre-School has a complaints procedure, which is accessible in the above policy and procedures file. We also welcome feedback from our parent/carers, children and staff about their experience of our pre-school. We regularly circulate the children's development logs for input from parents/carers and regular newsletters keep all our staff and parents/carers up to date with all the latest news and developments in the pre-school.

## Nutrition

At St Mark's Pre-School, we make every effort to ensure that the level of care, education and enjoyment that each child receives is the very best we can offer. This means that our pre-school, its staff and the way we do things are all focussed on what is best for the children we look after. Important elements of our care, is the provision of a wholesome, nutritional and well-balanced diet at snack time. We ask parents/carers to provide a small pot of cut-up fruit/veg for your child to accompany the other breakfast items we provide.

## Fees and Session times...

Open 38 weeks of the year.

Monday	–	9.00am – 12.00pm or 9.00am – 3.00pm
Tuesday	–	9.00am – 12.00pm or 9.00am – 3.00pm
Wednesday	–	9.00am – 12.00pm or 9.00am – 3.00pm
Thursday	–	9.00am – 12.00pm or 9.00am – 3.00pm
Friday	–	9.00am – 12.00pm or 9.00am – 3.00pm

## Which children qualify for a free place?

Children qualify for EYFE after their third birthday as follows:

<b>Date of birth falling between</b>	<b>Will be eligible for six terms from</b>
1 September and 31 December	Spring term
1 January and 31 March	Summer term
1 April and 31 August	Autumn term

Top up fee for a funded child = £8.00 per hour

Morning session for a 2-year-old = £28.50

Full day session for a 2-year-old = £57.00

## **Consumable Charge**

We have a consumable charge of .70p for each hour your child does with us.

## **Requirement of Mornings**

We require children to do a minimum of two mornings with us.

## **Fee increases**

Fees are reviewed annually and any increases will usually come into effect in the April of each year.

## **Additional Charges...**

There will be an additional charge applicable for late collection of your child(ren) at the end of their booked session. This will come in effect if your child(ren) are collected more than 10 minutes after their session ends and will be charged at the rate of £5.00 per child for each 5-minute period of lateness.

Consumables – we charge 48p per hour for the hours your child does with us, this calculation is also worked out for part hours.

## **Payment Policy...**

All deposits and fees are required to be paid by cash/cheque. Half a terms' worth of fees are required as a deposit prior to your child(ren) starting at the pre-school. Parents/carers will receive a bill/invoice before the start of the new half term. Bills/invoices are expected to be settled within two weeks if paying in full, or on the first day of your child's session if paying weekly. Late payment of bills/invoice may result in your child not being accepted into the nursery until the bill/invoice is settled.

## **Fees**

Fees are payable during periods of absence due to sickness, holidays taken, during your term time contract. No refund will be given in the event that the Pre-School has to close due to circumstances beyond its control such as severe weather conditions, no running water or pandemic outbreaks.

## **Registration**

A non-refundable £30 administration fee is payable upon an application being submitted.

## **Notice period**

Notice of withdrawal or cancellation must be given to the pre-school manager in writing four weeks in advance for non-funded children. Funded children are required to give half a terms notice which must be given before the new half term commences.

## **Change of personal details**

St Mark's Pre-School kindly requests that any changes of personal details such as address, telephone or mobile numbers are communicated to the pre-school manager at your earliest convenience. Accurate contact details are vital in case of emergency.

## **Key Person**

The pre-school has a key person system. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom she/he is particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that what the pre-school provides is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the pre-school, she/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the pre-school their key worker will help your child to benefit from the pre-school activities.

## **Settling in**

Your child's first day at pre-school can be a very emotional one for you all! The staffs recognise this and are there to give you the support you need. All children are different, and respond in different ways; some are ready to be left almost immediately, whilst for others it is a longer process. Your child's key person will always be at hand to help you and your child with this transition. Before your child starts with us, you will be offered one settling in sessions to help you and your child to become accustomed to our setting.

## **What to Wear**

In order to feel free to explore and experiment with all kinds of materials, including messy ones, it is best to send children dressed in clothes that are comfortable and easily washable and not in their 'best' outfits. It is good for children to practise the skills that will make them independent: Simple clothing they can handle themselves will enable them to go to the toilet when they want to. It is advisable to provide outdoor clothes that can be put on and taken off without being too dependent on the help of others.

## **Photographs and video recordings**

We take steps to ensure children are not photographed, filmed or videoed for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form for staff to take photographs or videos of their child for the purpose of tracking their development. We also require Parents to sign the Photography and Video Consent for parents at pre-school events to ensure appropriate parental conduct. For further information please refer to our Photography policy.

## **Valuing diversity and promoting equality**

The pre-school is committed to ensuring our service is fully inclusive and meets the needs of all children as set out in the Equality Act 2010. We recognise that children and their families come from diverse backgrounds. All families have needs and values that arise from their social and economic, ethnic and cultural or religious backgrounds. The pre-school is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families, including the provision for supporting children with special educational needs, vulnerable groups and those children who speak English as an additional language.

## ***Partnership with Parents***

Parents are regarded as members of the St Mark's Pre-School who have full participatory rights.

These include a right to be:

- valued and respected;
- kept informed;
- consulted;
- involved; and
- included at all levels

## **Behaviour Management**

The setting has a behaviour management policy that is adhered to by all staff. Positive behaviour strategies are used daily within the group.

Parents will be informed of continual unacceptable behaviour in private by the staff. The staff working in partnership with the parents will work to resolve unacceptable behaviour. Physical intervention would only be used if it were necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children, staff or other adults. This would then be recorded and parents would be informed as soon as possible.

## **Illness**

If your child becomes ill, or has an accident while attending the pre-school, we will contact you by telephone. If there is no reply we will ring your emergency contact number. Please ensure these are always up-to-date e.g. if mobile numbers change during the year. If your child has been vomiting or had diarrhoea, please be aware that they must be clear of these symptoms for 48 hours before coming back to pre-school.

If we can help with anything that we may not have answered please do feel free to ask.

Lorraine, Nicole and the team.