



Dear Parents and Carers

We are delighted you are interested in Herons' Pre-School.

We hope this brochure will provide you with some useful information.

We would strongly encourage you to come and visit us. We are offering tours of the preschool on Monday-Friday at either 11am Or 2pm, please do contact us to book a viewing. We advise coming to see us the term before you require, as things can change if you visit too far in advance.

We look forward to welcoming you!

Angela Impey
Herons' Pre-School Manager

Registered Charity number 1195255

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Herons' Pre-School

General Information

Herons' Preschool Waterbeach is located in a newly refurbished building at the entrance to the former army barracks in the heart of Waterbeach. It is a community based charitable preschool which previously operated as Waterbeach Toddler Playgroup from a portacabin on the grounds of Hatley Court, a residential care home for the elderly. After many years of searching and hard work from numerous committees and staff members we finally secured a building on the former army barracks which, thanks to the developers Urban and Civic and the County Council, together with a number of grants, has been transformed into a fantastic preschool facility with two large rooms, modern facilities and a wonderful outside space.

The pre-school is registered with OFSTED (OFSTED number 2674419) and is registered for Nursery Education Vouchers and Free Early Education for Two, three and four year olds- further details on-<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-learning>

We are open 5 days a week from 9am to 3pm split into morning and afternoon sessions. We are able to offer the following options:

Sessions for children of two years old to school age are-

Early Birds: 8.30am - 9.00am
Morning: 9am - 12pm
Morning (plus lunch): 9am - 1pm
Afternoon: 12pm - 3pm
All day: 9pm - 3pm

We plan our sessions to accommodate the developmental needs of two, three and four year olds.

We introduce each child into the pre-school so that their individual needs can be met. When you visit the pre-school we will discuss a 'settling in' plan for your child with you.

Aims of Herons' Preschool

- To provide a safe, caring environment with qualified staff
- To help pre-school children enjoy learning through play
- To promote each area of development, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, social and physical within a stimulating framework of play, enabling children to reach their full potential.
- To prepare children for school and to ease their transition from home into full time education.

We do our best to develop a close partnership with all parents and carers.

We want to work together with you to encourage, develop and support your child.

We acknowledge the individuality of children, each child being respected as important, unique and precious in their own right. We aim to provide a nurturing and loving environment, with a high ratio of staff. This is particularly of benefit to any child needing extra attention and help.

Management Information

Management

Heron's' Trustees provide resources and organisational support for the pre-school. The day to day running of the sessions is carried out by the staff team who are accountable to the Heron's' trustees.

The Trustees

The Trustees consists of a Chair, a Secretary, a Treasurer and other representative of the Trustees. Parents are welcome to become Trustee members.

Please speak to the Manager if you are interested or contact the Trustees directly- some are current parents. Diane Kagoyire is the Trustee Chair and can be contacted via email on heronspreschool.chair@gmail.com

Management Information

Staffing

We will take a maximum of 36 children per session. To enable us to provide high quality care and education for your child we operate at well above the legal adult child ratios.

To provide consistency for the children we keep our staff team small so that adults and children can build close, positive relationships with each other. We particularly want to support children with any kind of additional needs, and our SENCO applies for available grants. We also work closely with the other agencies to arrange TAF's and refer families if any further support is needed.

Key Person

We operate a system which means that every child in the setting will have a nominated member of staff specifically responsible for them, called the 'Key Person'. This person is ideally placed to be the first point of contact for you, as a parent or carer.

It is useful to let them know of any concerns you may have, or any useful information, e.g. the death of a pet, which could affect the way your child feels at pre-school.

If your child's Key Person is unavailable or you would prefer to speak to the Manager or Deputy, please feel free to do so.

Some of our policies can be viewed on our web site and others are available on request.

Admissions Policy

We are registered with OFSTED to take children from the age of two years up. In this age-group the staff ratio is always 1:5. A ratio of 1:8 is maintained for our three- and four-year olds, although we prefer to operate with more staff than needed.

Following your visit, you can submit a Registration Form and once we have received the completed and signed registration form we will confirm the days you wish your child to attend and their start date. We will send you a Welcome pack and discuss settling in sessions at this point- this is generally the term before they are due to start.

We will also need to see your child's birth certificate before or on the day they start with us.

Fund Raising

Fees only cover some of the costs of running the pre-school. Fund raising activities and kind donations enable us to provide the facilities and resources made available for the children. We welcome fund-raising initiatives from parents so if you have some ideas and suggestions, please let us know.

Behaviour policy

We aim to encourage children in Herons' to behave in socially acceptable ways and understand the needs and rights of others.

We believe children need to learn to express their feelings appropriately and learn to solve the conflicts they have with one another. We seek to work sensitively alongside parents and carers to offer support and guidance on any behaviour issues both at pre-school and in the home. In very rare cases, we may have to ask parents to collect their child if we feel we are unable to keep them and others safe.

Equal Opportunities

We endeavour to create a positive attitude towards the multi-cultural society in which we live. All children and staff at pre-school are treated equally, irrespective of gender, race, religion, language, culture or ability.

Special Needs

We aim to provide equal opportunities to all members of our group and this includes any child with special educational needs. Our staff are experienced in working with children with special needs.

Fees Structure

Fees for September 2025 are £8 per hour for 2 year olds and £7 for 3-4 year olds. The Early Birds session is invoiced as a full hour. They are reviewed annually, and you will be invoiced for a half term's fees at the beginning of each half term. These can be paid weekly or monthly, but must be paid in full, two weeks before the end of that term. Payment must be made for all sessions that are missed for whatever reason.

Educational Programme

Activities & Types of Play

At Herons' Pre-School we plan for and support play and learning using the guidance provided by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

We offer the children free-flow access to all our amazing areas. We also organise visitors for the children so that they can experience the rich environment in which we live.

Each week we have 2 sessions of Forest School and this takes place in our own garden area. We also have Cooking Club once a week and the children use a variety of skills to create something delicious.

Most of all, we seek to allow our children to inspire the curriculum, based on their own interests and learning needs. If you would like to know more please ask us, we love to talk about this!

Personal social and emotional development (EYFS)

We promote work ethics, how to play and co-operate with others, to share and respect other cultures and beliefs.

Behaving appropriately and treating their environment with care are also important. We use our snack time to encourage social skills as we reflect on life at pre-school and share news from home. Children develop their likes and dislikes with different foods and enjoy the happy, chatty environment

Physical Development (EYFS)

We use activities to promote strength, coordination and manipulative skills. We make sure that gross and fine-motor skills are developed using equipment such as the climbing, ladder, slide and construction toys such as Lego, Stickle Bricks, Brio, and straws.

Communication and Language (EYFS)

We tell stories from books, or use a story props. Music is introduced using instruments and CDs. Our staff have received training to use a variety of adult-child interaction strategies and are highly skilled at enabling children's language development.

Literacy (EYFS)

We read books in small groups, tell stories using the story boards, toys and puppets. The children are also encouraged to independently read books- to choose, share and engage in what they are reading.

Mathematics (EYFS)

We begin counting, sorting, sharing, measuring, weighing, learning about shapes and space and understanding the language for simple mathematical ideas.

Understanding of the World (EYFS)

We explore and recognise features of living things and become aware of the environment. We introduce technology and have the opportunity to talk about our lives, experiences, wishes and understanding. We also help children to begin to understand that there are many different beliefs and customs and cultures. We mark a variety of different cultural and faith events in the year calendar which reflect our diversity.

Expressive Arts and design (EYFS)

Activities involve painting, sewing, threading, drawing, collages, modelling clay, play dough, sand and water, junk modelling. It is not the end result but the doing that is important and it is OK to get messy and have fun. Dressing up clothes, playhouse, dolls, garage, cars and trains, are other activities, which encourage role play and self- expression. Music happens a lot in Herons', there's singing, cd's and musical instruments to suit all fancies!



Procedures

Arrival

Children may not be left in the care of pre-school staff before 9.00a.m. unless they have booked in for Early Birds and if so can be dropped off at 8.30am.

Children should arrive by the entrance at the front of the building at 9am or at 12pm at the Green Gate. Parking is available but please park carefully and be aware that there will be children and parents moving around. Children should not be allowed to run around the car park while arriving or departing the preschool.

Absence

Please advise us if your child is going to be absent from pre-school. If we haven't heard from you by 10.30am we will contact you to check everything is ok. We regret that we cannot refund fees for missed sessions and unfortunately you will not be able to make up the sessions on other days.

Departure

At the end of the session the children gather for a closing large group time and our Goodbye song. Parents are asked to wait at the gate at the back of the building, and children are brought out together and called forward, one by one and reunited with their parents. Please make sure that you are on time when coming to collect your child to prevent unnecessary distress.

Please inform the Manager if someone else will be collecting your child. In the interests of security we will not allow your child to be collected by anyone else without your permission. We operate a special password system to ensure that children are only sent home with people you have deemed 'safe'.

Communication

The notice board in the reception displays the pre-school insurance certificate and some relevant information regarding Herons'. Please do go and take a look.

There is a Half termly email newsletter to inform parents of activities planned for the coming term. Weekly we update our closed Facebook page with activities and Forest School for you to see.

Daily we use the white board to let you know what we have been up to- this is located at the departures gate.

Permission slips, invoices, receipts etc, will be emailed or given to you by hand.

We hope that parents will always feel free to talk to staff when collecting their child, alternative times can always be arranged, so please do not hesitate to ask.

Parental Involvement

The pre-school is dependent on the support of the parents. All parents are encouraged to discuss their child's activities and progress with the Manager or key person. Should you have any queries or ideas to enhance the home to pre-school links we would be happy to hear your thoughts and try out new ideas.

We also host a one-to-one session with each parent/carer twice a year (Autumn & Summer term) to discuss their child's next steps and future provision. The Child's allocated Key person will discuss progress and learning and build a close mutual understanding with parents/carers towards achieving their child's developmental goals.

Confidentiality

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:

Developmental records

(Observations of children, photographs, video clips and samples of their work and summary developmental reports.) These can be freely accessed, and contributed to, by staff, the child and parents.

Personal records

(Application, registration and admission forms, signed consent forms, and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, and any confidential matter such as developmental concerns or child protection matters.)

These confidential records are stored in a lockable cupboard and are kept secure by the pre-school management team. Parents have access to records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child. Parents need to submit this request in writing. Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff are to tell the Management Team of any changes in personal information so our records can be kept up to date. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person at all times. We retain children's records for approx.. 6 years years after they have left the setting. These are kept in a secure place.

Health

If your child is feeling unwell, please keep them at home. It is unfair on them and other children to bring them to the pre-school.

Please advise us if your child contracts an infectious disease, so that we can advise other parents, and please keep them at home until they are no longer infectious and feel well enough to return. If your child is suffering from vomiting or diarrhoea please keep them at home for at least 48 hours after symptoms have ceased.

You should advise the pre-school of any specific health problems on the registration information form. You are requested to sign an emergency consent form in case your child has a serious accident while at pre-school.

Accidents at pre-school are recorded on an accident form, which we ask you to countersign once you have been informed of the accident/injury involving your child. You will also be asked to sign an Existing Injuries form if your child arrives at pre-school with, for example, a significant bruise, graze, or scratch.

Snacks and Lunch

We ask that you provide a snack and/or lunch if your child is with us for lunch. We ask that all pots are labelled and ask that items such as cakes/biscuits/crisps/chocolate be kept at a minimal as we operate a healthy eating policy. All children are asked to bring in a named water bottle. We are a strict 'No Nuts' setting- please do not provide any food that contains nuts.

Visitors to Pre-School

Occasionally we arrange for a Police Officer, Doctor, Nurse, Optician or Veterinary Nurse to visit Pre-School to talk to the children. These visits are based on the learning curriculum as well as children's own interests and the current topic in pre-school at the time. Parents are encouraged to

share any interesting careers or hobbies, please speak to the Manager about the possibility of coming to share your wisdom and joy with the children. We'd also love to know of any cultural or faith festivals which children celebrate at home that we could share and celebrate with them in Herons'.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfy clothes that you don't mind getting dirty. We ask that your child does not attend wearing jewellery, especially chains which can get caught on equipment or be broken during play. Hoop earrings are not to be worn at pre-school by any child. Flat soft soled shoes should be worn to avoid injuries to your own or another child. For safety reasons, flip-flops are not permitted. Please always ensure that your child has suitable clothing for outdoor play e.g. wellies (named) and coat for when it's raining.

Complaints

In the event of having a complaint, please contact the Management Team who will undertake to act promptly and to the best of their ability. Diane Kagoyire is the Trustee Chair and can be contacted via email on heronspreschool.chair@gmail.com and can help with any problem that cannot be dealt with within the pre-school. Further to this you may contact our registration body OFSTED tel : 0300 1234666 or online via www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted