

St Gabriel's Catholic Pre-School

PARENTS PROSPECTUS



Well Lane, Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 2PG

Tel: 01270 875770 Mobile: 07790 577097

Email: stgabspreschool@googlemail.com

Leader: Mrs Jennifer Vokes EYP/BA Hons

Deputy: Mrs Julia Sterio BEd Hons Degree

Welcome to St Gabriel's Catholic Pre-School and thank you for expressing an interest in registering your child with us.

We know how important your child is and aim to deliver the highest quality of care and education to help them to achieve their best.

This prospectus aims to provide you with an introduction to our pre-school, our routines, our approach to supporting your child's learning and development and how we aim to work together with you to best meet your child's individual needs.

Our setting aims to:

- provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age;
- work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop;
- add to the life and well-being of the local community; and
- offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

Parents

Parents are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be:

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

As a community based, voluntary managed setting, we also depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep going. In joining our setting, we carry the expectations on you for your support and commitment.

Children's development and learning

We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment;

- is given generous care and attention, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as volunteer parent helpers;
- has the chance to join in with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;
- is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do;
- has a personal key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress;
- is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop; and
- is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision for children's development and learning from birth to 5 years is guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2012). Our provision reflects the four overarching principles of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

1. A Unique Child

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured.

2. Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

3. Enabling Environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.

4. Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The Areas of Development and Learning comprise:

Prime Areas

- Personal, social and emotional development.
- Physical development.
- Communication and language.

Specific Areas

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

For each area, the level of progress that children are expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know, and be able to do, by the end of the reception year of their education.

The *Early Years Outcomes* (DfE 2013) guidance sets out the likely stages of progress a child makes towards the Early Learning Goals. Our setting has regard to these when we assess children and plan for their learning. Our programme supports children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for:

Personal, social and emotional development

- making relationships;
- self confidence and self awareness; and
- managing feelings and behaviour.

Physical development

- moving and handling; and
- health and self-care.

Communication and language

- listening and attention;
- understanding; and
- speaking.

Literacy

- reading; and
- writing.

Mathematics

- numbers; and
- shape, space and measure.

Understanding the world

- people and communities;
- the world; and
- technology.

Expressive arts and design

- exploring and using media and materials; and
- being imaginative.

Our approach to learning and development and assessment

Learning through play

Being active and playing supports young children's learning and development through doing and talking. This is how children learn to think about and understand the world around them. We use the EYFS statutory guidance on education programmes to plan and provide opportunities which will help children to make progress in all areas of learning. This programme is made up of a mixture of activities that children plan and organise for themselves and activities planned and led by practitioners.

Characteristics of effective learning

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance as:

- playing and exploring - engagement;
- active learning - motivation; and

- creating and thinking critically - thinking.

We aim to provide for the characteristics of effective learning by observing how a child is learning and being clear about what we can do and provide in order to support each child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs or videos of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they, as parents, are supporting development.

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

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that settings supply parents and carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the three prime areas of learning and development: personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language; when a child is aged between 24 - 36 months. At our pre-school, children do not start until they are 3, therefore we do not carry out these 'progress checks'. However, if your child has had a 'progress check' completed at another setting, prior to attending our setting, we would appreciate it if a copy is provided to us prior to their first day to enable us to take account of the views and contributions of parents and other professionals about a child's development.

Records of achievement

We keep a record of achievement for each child. In this setting, we use an electronic software system called 'My Learning Book' to record and document your child's learning and developmental progress. You will be able to access your child's 'Learning Journey' via the Parent Portal on the 'My Learning Book' website. A username and password will be issued to you when your child starts with us, usually once our

first baseline assessment of your child has been completed (within the first 4 weeks of your child starting with us)/ 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.

Your child's key person will work in partnership with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the key person will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

Working together for your children

We maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set by the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements. We also have volunteer parent helpers, where possible, to complement these ratios. This helps us to:

- give time and attention to each child;
- talk with the children about their interests and activities;
- help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide; and
- allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety.

Our Opening Hours

We are open **term time only** and our term dates match that of St Gabriel's Catholic Primary school.

We are open for:

Monday: 8.45am to 12.45pm

Tuesday: 8.45am to 2.45pm

Wednesday: 8.45am to 2.45pm

Thursday: 8.45am to 2.45pm

Friday: 8.45am to 12.45pm

We provide care and education for young children from after their 3rd birthday and until they are eligible to start the Reception Class of primary school, i.e. age 3 and 4 years of age.

Our staff are*:

Name	Job Title	Qualifications and Experience
Jennifer Vokes	Pre-School Manager/Leader	NNEB, BA(Hons) Early Childhood Studies and EYP (Early Years Professional). Jenny has worked with children for over 25 years now, initially as a nanny and for the last 10 years in her present role. She has two children at High School.
Julia Sterio	Pre-School Deputy	B Ed Primary Julia completed a theology degree after leaving school and carried on to gain her primary school teaching qualification. She has worked as a primary school teacher prior to her present role in our setting which she has held for 7 years now. She also has two children at High School.
Nicola Brooker	Pre-School Practitioner	NVQ3 Child Care, Learning and Development. Nicky gained her NVQ3 whilst working in a local day nursery and has been in her role with us for the past 4 years. She has two children who are both at university.

***List of staff is correct at time of printing but may be subject to change.**

How parents take part in the setting

Our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their children. 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;
- helping at sessions of the setting through the parent's rota;
- sharing their own special interests with the children;

- helping to provide and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;
- being part of the management of the setting where appropriate;
- taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting;
- joining in community activities and supporting fundraising activities, in which the setting takes part; and
- building friendships with other parents in the setting.

The parents' rota

The setting has a dated rota which parents can sign if they would like to help at a particular session or sessions of the setting. Helping at the session enables parents to see what the day-to-day life of the setting is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities.

Joining in

Joining the rota is not the only means of taking part in the life of the setting. Parents can offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children or simply to come in 10 minutes earlier at the end of the session to read their child's favourite story to the group. Parents have visited the setting to play the clarinet for the children, show pictures of the local carnival held in their neighbourhood, and show the children their collection of shells. Not only do we welcome parents, but the wider family group members are also encouraged to join in too

We welcome parents to drop into the setting to see it at work or to speak with the staff.

Key person and your child

Our setting uses a key person approach. 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 the childcare that we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, she/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, she/he will help your child to benefit from the setting's activities.

Learning opportunities for adults

As well as gaining childcare qualifications, our staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with thinking about early years care and education. The setting also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice by attending courses and through reading regular professional magazines. At the beginning of each academic year we hold an 'Information Evening' for parents to learn more about how the setting supports children's learning and how we can support parents at home with their children's learning.

The setting's timetable and routines

Our setting believes 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 she/he is 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; and
- provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

The session*

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 and large 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 in the indoor playroom(s).

Snacks and meals

The setting makes snacks and lunch a social time at which children and adults eat together. We plan the menus for snacks so that they provide the children with healthy and nutritious food. Please tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met. If children stay for lunch (between 12 noon and 1pm) then parents need to provide a healthy and nutritious packed lunch which we will store in the kitchen until lunch time. In order to keep the costs down, we do ask that parents help us provide healthy snacks by donating food items, such as fresh fruit, dried fruit, cheese, dips, Water

is on offer to the children for the duration of the day. Additionally, we provide milk at snack times to ensure the children have a healthy drink. We do not provide juices for the children due to the high sugar content.

Clothing

We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities. We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off, and putting on, outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this, such as pull up trousers and skirts and shoes fastened with velcro.

We also have a good stock of wellies and waterproof suites to ensure that children can access the outdoors in all weather conditions.

Illness

It would also be appreciated if parents could telephone the Pre-School if their child is unable to attend due to illness.

Chickenpox, Measles and other childhood illness are unfortunately apparent in schools. We take sensible precautions to ensure that children are not put at risk and our staff are extremely vigilant for any signs of infection. Please see Appendix B for the list of diseases and recommended exclusion time as advised by the Health Protection Authority.

If your child does contract any childhood illness, such as Chickenpox etc, please inform the Pre-School Leader. The Leader will then ensure other parents are informed, giving information on signs and symptoms to look out for. We ask parents to keep their child at home until the Doctor gives the all clear to return to Pre-School.

Unfortunately, we also have cases of sickness and/or diarrhoea, which are particularly infectious. In these cases, we ask parents to keep the child away from Pre-School for at least 48 hours after their last occurrence of sickness or diarrhoea to ensure the health of other children in the

setting. It is the Pre-School Leader's responsibility to decide whether to contact the parent or carer of a child and ask for the child to be collected if they are ill during a session.

Children with head lice are not excluded, but **must** be treated to remedy the condition. Parents will be notified if there is a case of head lice in the Pre-School and information given on available treatments.

Admissions

We aim to meet parent's needs for places for their children. We arrange our waiting list in birth order, a copy of our Admissions Policy is attached at the end of this Prospectus. Admission to St Gabriel's Catholic Pre-School **does not guarantee your child a place at St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School.** Parents wishing to apply for a place at the Primary School must contact the school and also complete the Admissions Pack sent out by Cheshire County Council's School Admissions Team in the Autumn Term.

Policies

Our staff can explain our policies and procedures to you. We have a wide range of policies and procedures, all of which are available for you to see at the setting. The Parent's Policy file is available for parents to take home overnight and in the unit where the daily signing in register is homed. If you wish to take the Policy File home, please just ask a member of staff and they will help you to locate it.

The setting's policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the setting is a high quality one and that being a member of the setting is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child, her/his parents and the staff.

The staff work together to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the setting to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

Safeguarding children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our settings and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulty. Our Safeguarding Co-ordinator (SoCCo) is: **Jennifer Vokes** whilst our Deputy SoCCo is **Julia Sterio**.

Special needs

As part of the setting's policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have. The setting works to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2014).

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator are:

Julia Sterio & Nicola Brooker
--

The management of our setting

A management committee manages the setting. Additionally, we ask parents in each September to put their names forward to be parent fundraising representatives, who will co-ordinate all fundraising events on behalf of the setting. This can be a shared role if more than one person puts their name forward and they will get the full support of the pre-school staff in the organisation of events.

The committee is responsible for:

- managing the setting's finances;
- employing and managing the staff;
- making sure that the setting has, and works to, policies that help it to provide a high quality service; and
- making sure that the setting works in partnership with the children's parents.

The parent representatives role is to:

- organise a fundraising committee group who organise events to raise funds for new resources in the setting.

The setting is owned by **St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School** and the management is overseen by the management committee, which consists of:

- the Head Teacher of St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School
- the Chair of Govenors of St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School
- the Parish Priest of St Gabriel's Catholic Church

- the manager of the pre-school

Fees

The fees are £6.25 per hour payable at the beginning of each half term. Fees must still be paid if children are absent without notice for a short period of time. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, talk to the manager.

For your child to keep her/his place at the setting, you must pay the fees. We are in receipt of free early education grant funding three and four year olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply. It may also be possible for you to pay through work childcare vouchers schemes if you have joined one.

Starting at our setting

The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. 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 the setting. Our policy on the Role of the Key Person and Settling-in is enclosed with this prospectus.

Finally.....

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 staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.

ST GABRIEL'S CATHOLIC PRE-SCHOOL



10.2 Admissions

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met.

Policy statement

It is our intention to make our setting accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. We aim to ensure that all sections of our community have access to the setting through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.

Procedures

- We ensure that the existence of our setting is advertised locally in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- We ensure that information about our setting is accessible and provided in written and spoken form.
- We will provide translated written materials where language needs of families suggest this is required, as well as access to an interpreter through Cheshire East Council. Where necessary, we will try to provide information in Braille, or through British Sign Language.
- We arrange our waiting list in birth order. In addition, our policy may take into account the following:
 - the faith of the child;
 - the vicinity of the home to the setting; and
 - siblings already attending the setting.

Our Admissions Criteria mirrors that of St Gabriel's Catholic Primary and is as follows:

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA (As of September 2014, please check with school as this may change)

1. **Baptised Catholic Looked After children, other Looked After children and previously Looked After children**
2. **Baptised Catholic children who have a sibling in the school at the time of admission**

3. **Baptised Catholic children resident in the parishes of St. Gabriel's in Alsager or St. Winefride's in Sandbach**
4. **Baptised Catholic children resident in other parishes**
5. **Other children who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission**
6. **All remaining places will be allocated to other children, according to the proximity of the child's house to the school, with those living nearer receiving higher priority.**

- We keep a place vacant, if this is financially viable, to accommodate an emergency admission.
- We describe our setting and its practices in terms that make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders.
- We describe how our practices treat each child and their family, having regard to their needs arising from their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, social background, religion and ethnicity or from English being a newly acquired additional language.
- We describe how our practices enable children and/or parents with disabilities to take part in the life of the setting.
- We monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that our intake is representative of social diversity.
- We make our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality Policy widely known.
- We consult with families about the opening times of the setting to ensure we accommodate a broad range of families' needs.
- We are flexible about attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, providing these do not disrupt the pattern of continuity in the setting that provides stability for all the children.

This policy was adopted by the Management

Committee of St Gabriel's Catholic Pre-School on: October 2015

Renewal Date: October 2016