

## Introduction

The Ryde Pre-school was formally known as Cockaigne Voluntary Nursery School – funded by a grant from Hertfordshire County Council, fees paid by parents and fundraising – providing nursery education for children from 2 years 10 months to school age. In September 1997, the County Council introduced free nursery places for all four year olds; as a consequence of this, the grant for the voluntary nursery was withdrawn and provision for the four year olds taken into a nursery class at The Ryde School. The Ryde Pre-school then came into being to continue provision for children from 2 years 10 months.

The Pre-school have achieved a successful Pre-school Learning Alliance Accreditation and Herts. Quality Standard Award for the provision of quality early years education and care for children from rising 3 to 5 years.

The Pre-school is situated in a purpose built building in the grounds of The Ryde School and is shared with the school nursery. The classroom has its own entrance and is self-contained. It has its own toilets and washbasins and its own area for coats and bags. We use the same equipment as the nursery class; this includes the adventure playground, outdoor facilities and outdoor equipment such as tricycles and bicycles. The outdoor facilities include a fenced area for play and a garden for growing plants and vegetables in, (we incorporate gardening in our curriculum as it helps the children become aware of the natural world and environment). We are also able to use part of the school playground. This is particularly useful for riding tricycles etc. and also during the winter when we are unable to use the grass, as it is too muddy!

## Facts and Figures

The Ryde Pre-school is a non-profit making organisation, which is run by an elected management committee of parents and staff. The Pre-school is registered with Ofsted to take up to 32 children from the ages of 2 years up to 5 years. In addition of this we are also a registered charity.

The Ryde Pre-school operates 4 afternoon sessions per week (11.55pm – 3.40pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) term time only. We offer different session days and lengths according to age. We also offer a Lunch Club, originally funded by a grant from SureStart, and extended care to The Ryde School nursery children. The term dates of the Pre-school correspond with those of local schools.

We employ five to six members of staff according to ratios

Pre-school Leader	Mrs Carolyn Middleton (NVQ3, currently undertaking a Foundation Degree in Early Years)
Pre-school Deputy	Mrs Denise Heslop (NVQ3)
Pre-school Key Worker	Mrs Janine Stevens (currently undertaking the NVQ3)
Pre-school Assistant	Mrs Paula Stevens (NVQ3)
Pre-school Assistant/ SENCo	Mrs Sarah Cassidy (NVQ2, currently undertaking the NVQ3)
Pre-school Assistant	Mrs Susannah Yorston

All staff have an Enhanced CRB and most staff hold a recognised emergency first aid qualification, which is updated regularly. All staff are trained in Child Protection issues. All staff are experienced and five are qualified. In addition all staff regularly attend up-dating training courses, to keep abreast on the current issues in childcare and education.

## Aims and Objectives

At the Ryde Pre-school we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum incorporating active learning and first hand experiences. We aim to stimulate the children and to extend their learning and experience by using a range of materials and equipment in planned and progressive ways, which advances their social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.

We follow the legal requirements, Statutory Framework and guidelines in the Early Years Foundation Stage and take into account the Governments Green Paper "Every Child Matters" and the Five Outcomes for Children. Our practice also incorporates the High/Scope Key Principles.

## The Essence of High/Scope

High/Scope is an approach that is widely used in Hertfordshire nurseries. We implement some of the recommended strategies that encourage the children to be independent and to learn by doing. They are also encouraged to be self-motivated and to become aware of feelings and needs of others.

The room is arranged so that the children are able to help themselves to equipment and to plan and carry out chosen tasks with as little intervention from adults as possible except in a supportive role. This is particularly important when the child has planned their own activity, but also valuable when an adult has suggested an activity and the child is able to find the equipment required to carry out a particular task.

## The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a framework for children from birth to five years. It sets out the legal requirements and obligations for all providers. The Statutory Framework sets out the standards for learning and development as well as the welfare requirements that all providers who are registered with Ofsted must comply with.

The learning and development requirements comprise of three elements including assessment, educational requirements and Early Learning Goals.

### **Assessments**

The staff at the Pre-school carry out ongoing observations and assessments of all the children and a record of achievement for each child is kept. Each term we hold parent consultations. This enables us to share and discuss with you your child's progress, records and achievements. Your child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together their achievements and to work together to plan and provide relevant learning experiences for each child.

### **Educational Requirements and Early Learning Goals**

There are six areas of learning and development covered by the Early Learning Goals and each have a programme statement to say how they should be provided for. The Early Learning Goals are expectations which are hoped to be reached by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are split into six areas. A Practice Guidance gives providers detailed information about the six areas. This is split into development matters which show progression from birth to five and is used to help plan for children and their individual needs

The six areas of learning and development are:

*Personal, Social and Emotional Development;*

- having a positive approach to learning and finding out about the world around them;
- having confidence in themselves and their ability to do things, and valuing their own achievements;
- being able to get on, work and make friendships with other people, both children and adults;
- becoming aware of - and being able to keep to - the rules which we all need to help us to look after ourselves, other people and our environment;
- being able to dress and undress themselves, and look after their personal hygiene needs; and
- being able to expect to have their ways of doing things respected and to respect other people's ways of doing things.

*Communication, Language and Literacy:*

- being able to use conversation with one other person, in small groups and in large groups to talk with and listen to others;
- adding to their vocabulary by learning the meaning of - and being able to use - new words;
- being able to use words to describe their experiences;
- listening to and distinguishing different sounds;
- getting to know the sounds and letters which make up words
- listening to - and talking about - stories;
- knowing how to handle books and that they can be a source of stories and information;
- knowing the purposes for which we use writing; and
- making their own attempts at writing.

*Problem Solving Reasoning and Numeracy:*

- building up ideas about how many, how much, how far and how big;
- building up ideas about patterns, the shape of objects and parts of objects, and the amount of space taken up by objects;
- starting to understand that numbers help us to answer questions about how many, how much, how far and how big;
- building up ideas about how to use counting to find out how many; and
- being introduced to finding the result of adding more or taking away from the amount we already have.

*Knowledge and Understanding of the World:*

- finding out about the natural world and how it works;
- finding out about the made world and how it works;
- learning how to choose - and use - the right tool for a task;
- learning about computers, how to use them and what they can help us to do;
- starting to put together ideas about past and present and the links between them;
- beginning to learn about their locality and its special features; and
- learning about their own and other cultures.

*Physical Development:*

- gaining control over the large movements which we can make with our arms, legs and bodies, so that they can run, jump, hop, skip, roll, climb, balance and lift;
- gaining control over the small movements we can make with our arms, wrists and hands, so that they can pick up and use objects, tools and materials; and
- learning about the importance of - and how to look after - their bodies.

### *Creative Development:*

- using paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play to express their ideas and feelings; and
- becoming interested in the way that paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play can be used to express ideas and feelings.

All children learn best from experiences that are suitable for their stage of development. Play is a key to the way young children learn. Through play your child can develop. We aim to develop the children's early knowledge, understanding, skills and independence to provide a sound basis for later education and life. We observe the children for their progress and we update our records accordingly. This allows us to recognise the areas of development that need promoting and to recognise any problems the children may have.

Pre-school has a high ratio of adults to children in the setting. 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.

## A Partnership with Parents and Carers Working together for your children

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, The Ryde Pre-school recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as co-workers with you in providing care and education for your child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the Pre-school 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 Pre-school;
- sharing their own special interests with the children;
- helping to provide, make and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;
- being part of the management of the Pre-school;
- taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the Pre-school;
- joining in community activities in which the Pre-school takes part; and
- building friendships with other parents in the Pre-school.

## The Parents' Rota

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

Joining the rota is not the only means of taking part in the life of the Pre-school. You can offer to take part in a session by sharing your own interests and skills with the children. Parents have visited the Pre-school to share their hobbies, share their culture and have brought in their babies to show child development during our topic on "Growing and Ourselves". Do feel free to arrange to drop into the Pre-school, if you would like to see it at work or to speak with the staff.

## The Routine

11.45pm	Lunch Club for nursery children
11.55pm	Pre-school children arrive for lunch
12.45pm	Nursery children leave – pre-school children singing and story
1.10pm	Welcome for younger pre-school children.
1.15pm	Register and Weather Board for all pre-school children.
1.20pm	Small group time and planning.
1.35pm	Free choice play.
2.00pm	Tidy up time
2.15pm	Outside play.
2.45pm	Wash hands, Snack and recall.
3.00pm	Quiet reading.
3.10pm	Singing
3.25pm	Story.
3.35pm	Prepare to go home.
3.40pm	Home-time.

### Tuesday Library Day

The session is aimed at the children getting to know the Pre-school, the staff, the other children and the different equipment. It will be the first time that many of them have left mum and dad for any length of time and mixed with a large group of children. We aim to help them feel happy and secure in an environment that is stimulating and challenging. We encourage them to become independent and confident and to learn to share and to respect the needs of others.

When your child starts Pre-school they will be put into a colour group, each group having a member of staff assigned to it. These staff are called Key-workers. The children go into these groups for small group time, planning, snack and recall time.

Each member of staff is responsible for keeping the children's records and observations for their group. These are collated and discussed at our weekly staff meetings. These records move up with them to Nursery and then on to school.

During the small group time children participate in a planned activity directed by their Key worker, which introduces them to new experiences and helps them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others.

These activities are usually connected to the topic we are covering and they aim to cover the early learning goals as set out in The Early Years Foundation Stage.

The children will also be able to take a book home each week. They will be able to choose this themselves and we ask parents to share the book with them. This will encourage the enjoyment of books and the written word and is fundamental to pre-reading skills. Book bags are available to buy from the Pre-school.

When asking the children what they plan to do for free choice play time, we are trying to encourage the children to think more about what they intend to do during their free choice time.

During free choice play time the children will have the opportunity to experience creative activities such as painting, printing, collage, model making and many others. Other activities available at this time include role play with dressing up clothes and the home corner, drawing and cutting activities, construction toys such as Duplo and stickle bricks, small world toys such as the farm, dolls house, garage and cars, sand and water play (we have even used wheat grain in the sand tray during harvest festival time) puzzles, books, threading etc.

The children will become used to sitting with the group for story time and learn to participate in singing activities and develop their speaking and listening skills. All this will help them when they move on to school. We will cover simple topics such as colour and shape.

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. We have a selection of bicycles in our shed, available for the children to use.

## Admissions

The Ryde Pre-school operates a waiting list administered by our Membership Secretary. It is advisable to register your child when they are 18 months old. Please contact the Pre-school giving your child's full name, date of birth and your address and telephone number. You will be contacted during the term before your child is due to start at the Pre-school and a visit day will be arranged. If you wish to visit us before then please do not hesitate to telephone the Pre-school direct to make an appointment. We welcome visits from prospective parents. NB. Although the Pre-school uses the same facilities as The Ryde School Nursery we are a separate entity and a child that attends The Ryde Pre-school is NOT guaranteed a place at The Ryde School Nursery or The Ryde School. Hertfordshire County Council send out Nursery and School Application forms and deal with the allocation of places.

Please note that the current policy for admission at The Ryde Pre-school is based on the following criteria:

1. Special Educational Need which requires attendance at the pre-school.
2. Cared For Children who require attendance at the pre-school.
3. Sibling who previously attended The Ryde Pre-school.
4. Previous connection with the Pre-school.
5. Time on waiting list.

**These admission rules are subject to be reviewed from time to time by the Management Committee.**

## Visits – Getting to know one another

When your child has been offered a place at Pre-school you will be able to make an appointment to come and visit the Pre-school where you and your child will be able to meet the members of staff, participate in any activities and ask any questions. We will then offer another visit where you and your child can experience a session. At this visit your child will be placed in their colour group and you will be able to meet and talk with your child's Key worker. We also offer a home visit. This provides the opportunity for parents and children to meet the Pre-school Leader and the Key worker in a familiar setting and can be an excellent chance to discuss expectations or answer any further questions. The Pre-school and staff should therefore, not be an alien place when your child starts for the first time.

## First Day

You are welcome to stay with your child to settle them in and to have a look around the Pre-school yourself. You obviously know your own child better than anyone else but experience has taught us that a quick goodbye kiss and hasty exit leaving your child in our capable hands is less painful in the long run for both you and them.

A child who is tearful and unwilling to let mum or dad leave will have undoubtedly cheered up by the time their parent has got to the gate and it is the parent that has the miserable afternoon worrying, not their child.

There are of course exceptions to the rule and if your child is especially upset for any length of time we will contact you and perhaps suggest that you leave them for a shorter

length of time gradually extending to a full session when they are happier. If your child is upset for the first few sessions as you leave and you feel it may continue for more than a few minutes please be in a place where we can contact you by telephone.

## Snacks and Drinks

Water is available to the children throughout the pre-school session. At snack time we provide milk and/or drinking water pending on parents wishes. The snack provided by the Pre-school is usually a piece of fruit, which we encourage them to try; on some occasions it may be food from another culture. Please inform us of any food allergies or dietary requirements.

## Clothes and Shoes

Your child will spend a fair amount of time at Pre-school engaged in creative activities therefore it is wise to dress them in 'doesn't matter clothes' which they find easy to remove by themselves when they are going to the toilet (no dungarees please!) We do provide aprons, which the children have to wear, when participating in messy activities, but it is amazing how the paint creeps through! Paint is more easily removed from clothes if soaked in cold water first and the glue we use claims to be washable!

Please provide your child with a spare set of named clothes in a draw string bag which can be left on your child's peg at Pre-school as accidents do happen even with the most reliable of children. Sometimes the children get their clothes wet whilst playing at the water tray.

Bags are available to purchase from the Pre-school for a nominal charge.

We try to take the children out to play each day unless it is raining, so please send your child in a coat and encourage them to put it on and do up the fasteners themselves

Also during the Autumn and Winter months we do like children to have indoor shoes such as slippers or slip on plimsolls to change into from Wellington boots or outdoor shoes, (all should be named) this saves mud being brought into Pre-school. Mud makes a mess of the carpet, which the children sit on.

We understand that children may not be yet toilet trained and have the facilities to change nappies. You will be asked to sign a Home/ Pre-school Agreement regarding the toileting needs of your child. The staff at the pre-school will work together with you so as to provide consistent care in this matter. We follow our Contenance Policy and Procedure. If you wish to see a copy of this please speak to a member of staff.

Parents of children wearing nappies are required to provide wipes, nappy sacks and nappies/ pull ups for their child. Accidents are obviously inevitable and will be dealt with sympathetically.

## Toys

We prefer children not to bring toys to Pre-school and the management committee and staff unable to take responsibility for breakage's or loss.

Thursday is Showing Day children are welcome to bring in items from home to show to the rest of the group. These will be kept in your child's group box until showing time. **Please can you ensure these items are named.**

## Sleep and rests periods

Children can at times feel tired during the session. If this should happen we would ensure the safety of your child at all times. Quiet activities, perhaps a story, would be provided. Should your child fall asleep a mattress would be provided. They would be placed in a quiet corner in the room and supervised at all times. Depending on the time we may telephone the parents to collect their child.

## Health and Safety

We implement health and safety procedures approved by Herts. County Council and are inspected by Ofsted who check these aspects.

You will be issued with a Confidential Personal Record which we would like you to complete and hand in when your child starts Pre-school. This has details of emergency contact numbers and health records and allergies (including food as the children do take part in cooking activities). Please can you ensure this information is kept up to date and inform us of any changes as soon as possible.

Most our staff have attended First Aid training, which specialises in early years. We have a First Aid Box and an Accident/ Incident book, which you may be asked to sign if your child suffers a significant injury that requires more than a rub!

Please let us know if there are any changes in family circumstances, illness or death in the family as this can upset a child and may change behavioural patterns.

## Dropping off and collecting your child

It is the Pre-schools policy that you sign your child in and out of the session. Children will only be released to a person that has been authorised by you on the Collection Sheet. Please make sure that you deliver and collect your child to Pre-school on time. It can be very distressing for a young child to be left after their friends have departed.

## Illness

If your child requires any specialised medical treatment or medication then we require a letter from your GP outlining the treatment necessary for us to carry this out and training in administration of treatment or medication (please speak to the staff.)

If your child has been ill during the night or is feverish or fretful **please do not bring them to Pre-school.** It is unlikely that they will feel better whilst at Pre-school and it is quite probable that they will pass their germs around the class! In order to prevent spread of diseases parents should keep their children at home if they are suffering from any of the following:

<u>Illness</u>	<u>How long child should remain away from Pre-school</u>
Chicken Pox	6 days minimum from appearance of rash.
Measles	7 days minimum from appearance of rash.
Mumps	7 days minimum until swelling subsides.
Whooping Cough	21 days.
German Measles	5 days from onset of rash.
Ear & Throat Infection	Until child is properly fit.
Conjunctivitis	Until eyes are clear.
Impetigo	Until skin has healed.
Threadworms	Until treated.
Head Lice	Until treated (please inform Pre-school Leader immediately)
Diarrhoea	Until 48 hours after motions are normal.
Sickness	Until 48 hours after last bout of sickness.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at Pre-school we will contact their parents so that they can be taken home. The child will be made comfortable and supervised closely by staff until the parent/carer arrives. If your child is unable to attend Pre-school please let us know as soon as possible.

## Medicines

Our Policy is that medicines should only be taken to Pre-school when essential. This is where it would be detrimental to a child's health if the medicine were not given during Pre-school hours. We recommend to parents that most medications for short-term illness can be timed to fit around Pre-school hours. However if it is for the safety and well-being of the child we will administer medicines. The parent would be required to fill in and sign a 'Medicine/ Drug Administration, Consent & Acknowledgement Form' before any drugs will be administered. If your child requires any specialised medical treatment or medication then we require a letter from your GP outlining the treatment necessary for us to carry this out and training in administration of treatment or medication. Full details of the procedures are in our 'Managing medicines Policy and Procedures'. If you wish to see a copy please or have any questions please speak to a member of staff

## Policy on Behaviour and Discipline At Pre-school

We encourage children to learn to share and respect other people and property. If a child is particularly difficult and not conforming to expected behavioural patterns he will be spoken to and then possibly taken to one side with an adult and reminded of the sort of behaviour we expect at Pre-school. They may sit quietly with the adult until they have calmed down and are able to rejoin the group.

We suggest if a child has been unkind to another child, that they owe the injured person an apology, (though this is not insisted upon). We try to ensure that a child understands why they are apologising and also that the apology is meaningful.

The type of behaviour that we consider unacceptable at Pre-school is **Biting, Hitting, Kicking, Pinching, Spiting, Swearing, Rudeness (to both children and adults), Throwing and breaking toys, equipment and furniture.**

If a child is constantly difficult and their behaviour continues to be inappropriate we will confer with the parents.

## Finance

### **Fees**

We aim to keep our fees as low possible and we think we offer excellent value for money! The Pre-school has increasing numbers on its waiting list and we need to know definitely whether you intend to take up the place. The attached slip on the acceptance letter must be returned within 5 days from the date on the letter, together with your fees, if applicable, to secure your child's place or we may be obliged to offer the place to another child.

The fees are payable in advance, - they may be paid fully or in three instalments as indicated on the fee slip, although cheques must be cleared before commencement of the period of the term for which they are issued. If you are on benefits please indicate this on the acceptance slip as you may be entitled to funding towards the costs of the Pre-school.

Cheques should be made payable to The Ryde Pre-school. **We require half a term's notice of withdrawing a child from Pre-school or half a terms fees in lieu.** We regret that we are

unable to refund fees for absences or withdrawals without due notice except in very special circumstances.

### **Fund-raising**

This is a vital part of our activities. We rely on the support of the parents to run a series of fund-raising events throughout the year e.g. Sponsored event in the summer and our Christmas Fair. We also have a monthly Cake Sale.

We also run a number of social events such as coffee mornings, quiz nights and fun days. Fund-raising can be hard work but can also be FUN. We find that it brings people together and adds to involvement that our parents have with the Pre-school.

## Child Protection

The welfare of the child is our main concern. Our aim is to empower children so that they can learn the skills to be able to protect themselves. We are bound by the Local Authority to follow the guidelines laid down in Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. The Children Act 1989 and 2004 expect childcare and education establishments to work together with other agencies to safeguard the welfare of all children. If concerns should be raised within the Pre-school it would not be possible to guarantee confidentiality. Any concerns/evidence relating to this are kept in a secure confidential file and are shared with as few people as possible on a "need to know" basis. We have a duty to report suspicions of abuse to the Local Safeguarding Children Board and to OFSTED, in line with current County and Government Policy. We do all in our power to support and work with the child's family. If an allegation is made against a member of staff we will follow strict procedures as detailed in our Child Protection Policy. If you wish to see our policy on Child Protection Procedure please ask a member of staff.

## Confidentiality

It is our intention to respect privacy of the children and their families and we aim to ensure that all information is kept confidential.

## Complaints Procedure

If you feel you have any cause for complaint at Pre-school, please feel free to voice this or put it in writing to the Pre-school Leader or the Chairperson of the management committee. If you feel that your grievance has not been dealt with satisfactorily you may also contact Early Years OFSTED on 08456 404040 or write to Ofsted, National Business Unit, Royal Exchange Buildings, St. Ann's Square, Manchester. M2 7LA. A full procedure is set out in our Complaints Policy.

## Special Educational Needs / Equal Opportunities

It is our policy to give equal opportunities for learning through play and to develop self-esteem in all children, whatever gender, race, religion or culture and in those who have a disability. Every effort is made not to make children feel different from others whilst endeavouring to foster a positive identity. Children are treated and respected as individuals whose needs and values are catered for.

The Pre-school works to the requirements of the 1996 Education Act and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001). In order for children with special needs to access the curriculum fully and integrate with others a place will only be offered subject to availability, staff ratios and/or facilities. We also require the one to one member of staff and the appropriate funding to be in place in time for the child starting at the Pre-school.

## Policies

The Pre-school's policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the Pre-school is a high quality one and that being a member of the Pre-school is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and their parents.

The staff and parents of the Pre-school work together to adopt the policies and they all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the Pre-school to provide a quality service for its members and the local community. All of our policies are available to you at any time.

There are copies on our notice board but if you should wish to take one home please speak to a member of staff. Should you require a copy of any of our policies or handbooks in another language or media please ask and we will endeavour to provide this for you.

## The Management of The Ryde Pre-school

A parent management committee - whose officers are elected by the parents of the children who attend the Pre-school - manages the Pre-school. The elections take place at the Pre-school's Annual General Meeting. The committee is responsible for:

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

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all of the children who attend the Pre-school. It is their forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's activities

## Parents Notice Board

There is a parent's notice board situated in the Cloak Room Area. On this we display the week's theme and topic, details of the small group activities that we offer, links to the Early Years Foundation Stage and any forthcoming fund-raising events. So please take time to read the notice board.

## Newsletters

We aim to write a newsletter at least once a term and this will contain any vital dates or information you may need to know. If you are unsure about any matter please feel free to ask one of the staff who will be more than willing to help.

**We hope that we may have the pleasure of welcoming your child to The Ryde Pre-school. We are confident that they will enjoy their time with us and that by the time they leave us they will be totally prepared for their move to Nursery School.**