



# SOMERFORD KINDERGARTEN

## Handbook

**Telephone: 01260 299076**

email: [enquiries@somerfordkindergarten.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@somerfordkindergarten.org.uk)

[www.somerfordkindergarten.org.uk](http://www.somerfordkindergarten.org.uk)

Quinta School Grounds, Ullswater Road, West Heath, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 4LX

Registered Charity No 1104267 Ofsted No 305306

Registered Company Limited by Guarantee in England No 5076348

## **INTRODUCTION**

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to Somerford Kindergarten.

Somerford Kindergarten, a registered charity, was established in 1982, organised by a committee of parents on a non-profit making basis.

In September 2004, Kindergarten became a company limited by guarantee, although it has retained its charitable status. It has a Board of Directors and is run by a Management Committee of parents. All parents can become members of the company (liability is limited to £1) by completing the membership form available from staff. The committee organises many fund raising events throughout the course of the year together with the help of parents and friends. The Kindergarten is a small, friendly group with a high ratio of qualified and experienced staff and we aim to provide a caring, homely atmosphere in which your child may confidently take their first steps towards independence.

We are based in the grounds of Quinta School in West Heath, Congleton and are fortunate to have close links with the school. As an independent organisation, we are pleased to welcome children from throughout the area which generally attend the Kindergarten from 2 ½ years of age. After consultation with parents, the best time to start will be decided and the appropriate number of sessions offered.

We belong to the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA) and are bound by our Articles and Memorandum of Association and the latest 2008 PLA Constitution. A copy of our Policy Document is on the Notice board and available upon request.

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES**

We are fortunate in having four members of staff to care for up to twenty children (registered maximum is twenty four) at each of our sessions; although the surroundings are informal the sessions are carefully structured to offer a stimulating and enjoyable programme leading to the nationally approved early learning goals, with a mixture of child and adult led activities.

## **PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

In a supportive atmosphere your child will be helped to relate well to other children and adults and to develop independence, self-confidence and a sense of responsibility. There will be many opportunities to learn to share and to take turns. Through activities, conversation and practical examples, your child will learn acceptable ways of expressing feelings and empathising with others.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

In both large and small groups we particularly encourage the children to extend their vocabulary through the provision of stories, rhymes and news sharing. Because we are keen to foster a love of books, we run a small library from which each child may borrow a book to take home and share with their family. Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purposes of writing and when they are ready, to use drawn and written symbols for themselves.

## **NUMERACY**

By means of adult supported practical experience, children will become familiar with the sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities, which form the basis for early mathematics. As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems, children will be assisted to learn and use the vocabulary of mathematics identifying objects by shape, position, size, volume and number. Songs, games and picture books help children to become aware of number sequences and when they are ready, to use practical mathematical operations such as adding and subtracting.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

To extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the World, we follow a theme or topic of interest. The children are encouraged to bring in relevant objects for the interest table, to observe, contrast and compare. Sometimes we invite visitors, or we go out on related trips. There are many opportunities to experiment with natural and man-made materials, to use a variety of tools and to question and record why things happen and how things work.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Kindergarten has a good range of equipment both inside and outside, to help develop the children's confidence and enjoyment in their increasing physical skills, in climbing, balancing and movement. At the same time, children are supported in the development of the fine motor skills required to use tools, including pens and pencils and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

The Kindergarten provides an extensive variety of materials to encourage creative expression in paintings, drawings, collage and modelling. Children join in with and respond to music, dance and stories and there are many opportunities for imaginative role-play.

## **STAFF/QUALIFICATIONS**

We have a highly qualified, dedicated and caring staff, all of which have been with the Kindergarten for several years. All members of staff attend relevant training courses on a regular basis and hold current first aid certificates. As parents themselves, they understand the worries and needs of both children and carers so please feel free to talk to them at any time.

(Supervisor) R.S.C.N./R.G.N, D.P.P.Level 3

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

Safeguarding of Children Co-ordinator,

Cared for Children Co-ordinator

Certificate in Education, Nursery level

B.A. Hons Graphic Design, D.P.P. Level 3 (SEN Module)

Introduction to Preschool Practice

(Deputy Supervisor) BSc stats & computing.

Btec Ed Excel Childcare in Early Years Level 3.

Deputy Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

Food hygiene certificate.

(Administrator) D.P.P.Level 3, Special Needs Module

PGCE – Primary Education, BA English

D.P.P. Level 3, NVQ1 Teaching Assistant;

PGCE, Primary Education, BA Hons English

NVQ level 3 - Children's Care, Learning & Dev.

## **COMMITTEE**

The Committee consists of up to twelve parents, all of whom give their time voluntarily. The members are elected at the annual general meeting, which takes place during the autumn term.

The Committee deal with all aspects of Nursery administration, including building maintenance and fund-raising. Members are encouraged to each take responsibility for a specific 'job', determined by the amount of time they have to spare.

A current list of members is displayed on the Kindergarten notice board. If you would like to join the committee or could help on a one-off basis, please let us know. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

We would like to think that all children and parents enjoy their time with us at Kindergarten however, in the event that you are unhappy about any of our policies or procedures and wish to make a complaint, the supervisor or chairman should be approached as appropriate in the first instance. The matter will then be discussed confidentially and a decision agreed upon, which will be recorded. If the situation still cannot be resolved, the Regulator, Ofsted can be consulted at the following address:

The Regulator, OFSTED,  
Complaints & Investigations Team,  
OFSTED Early Years,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Royal Exchange Buildings,  
St Anne's Square,  
Manchester M2 7LA

Tel.: 08456 404040

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Somerford Kindergarten is open to all children, regardless of sex, race, colour, religion or disability.

We review the materials and activities on offer so that children have an appreciation of other peoples culture e.g. through books and stories, dressing up clothes, dolls of different races etc.

Kindergarten has a designated member of staff for Equal Opportunities matters.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS**

The Kindergarten aims to follow the DfEE (Department for Education and Employment) 'Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs' and to provide a welcoming environment and appropriate learning opportunities for all children.

Our staff to child ratio is high and our care system ensures that each member of staff is responsible for, and close to a small group of children, so that each child receives plenty of adult time and attention.

If your child has any special needs (speech, help with socialising etc.) the Kindergarten staff will work in liaison with outside professionals to help meet the child's needs and would also attend, whenever possible, relevant in-service training courses. Kindergarten has a designated member of staff for Special Educational Needs (SENCO).

## **SETTLING IN AND RECORDING PROGRESS**

We encourage parents and children to visit the Kindergarten before the child starts, to give you the opportunity to meet the staff and children and gain an insight into how the group runs. When your child starts properly, you are very welcome to stay as long as you would like to enable your child to settle in happily.

One member of staff (key person) will have particular care and responsibility for your child and with your assistance we will gradually build up a record of your child's progress. This record will be in the form of a folder containing observations and examples of your child's work, which shows their progress and achievements, from both Kindergarten and home.

Please could you inform staff of any changes in your home life (eg. a family or pet bereavement, moving house, mum having another baby etc.) as this can effect your child's behaviour, who can then be supported by the staff.

## **OPEN EVENING FOR PARENTS**

These are held for prospective, existing and new parents of the children. The evening provides an informal opportunity for parents to meet staff and committee members, to view the Kindergarten and to learn a little more about who we are and what we do.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

We like to celebrate each child's birthday and ask parents to provide a cake on a rota basis. Cakes need only be simple and can be either bought or 'home-made' – the children really do not mind. You will automatically be included on the rota and advised when it is your turn. Please let us know if you do not wish to participate.

## **SNACK TIME**

We offer milk or water and fruit at snack time. If there are any special dietary requirements these should be discussed with the staff.

When attending the Lunch Club please provide a named packed Lunch & drink, with a balance of savoury & sweet items.

## **BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE**

We aim to create a calm, busy and interesting atmosphere to ensure that the children feel secure, happy and involved. We encourage the older children to help the younger ones. We make a point of praising good behaviour, effort and achievement. We encourage everyone to help in tidying up and the children take turns in tasks such as handing out snacks, feeding the fish etc.

Unacceptable behaviour such as hitting, throwing, biting or spoiling other children's play is dealt with by explaining why it is unacceptable, and the child is helped to play appropriately. However, if we did come across a difficult behaviour problem, we would discuss this with the parent and try to solve the problem together.

Physical punishment is totally banned in this group.



## **COLLECTION OF CHILDREN**

With safety being a key issue in caring for your child, it is requested that you complete and return the 'authorisation to collect' form. If you wish any person other than those listed to collect your child, please supply a signed letter of authorisation to the Kindergarten.

For safety reasons, we would remind you that you are responsible for your child on arrival at the entrance hall and until your child is settled into the playroom under the supervision of a member of staff, and similarly, once you have collected your child from a session. During these periods, staff will not be responsible for supervising play areas. When entering or leaving the Kindergarten please keep your child under full supervision and do not allow him/her to use any play equipment, indoor or outdoor to prevent accidents.

## **FEES**

Fees are payable every half-term in advance and we would appreciate payment at the first session.

*In the event of a child withdrawing from the Kindergarten, we require six weeks notice in writing or fees in lieu of notice. Please see Policy Document (available in the Kindergarten or on our website) for further information.*

The Kindergarten cannot refund fees for unexpected absence during term time. However, parents may 'sell' places to other children – please see the notice board for details. Should you experience difficulty in paying your fees, please speak (in confidence) to a member of staff – help may be available.

We are now in receipt of 3 and 4 year old Educational Grant. We also accept payments via voucher schemes. To find out if your child is eligible please contact the supervisor.

Please contact the Registrar for details of current fees.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

All staff members are trained first-aiders.

## **SICKNESS**

A child should not attend the Kindergarten within 48 hours of having suffered from diarrhoea, vomiting or fever.

In the event of an accident, immediate first aid will be given and if it is considered necessary, an ambulance will be called and the parent contacted.

If it is necessary for your child to be given medication during a session – all details must be given in writing and also fully explained to the staff.

Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have an infection and to inform the Kindergarten as to the nature of the infection so that we can alert other parents and make careful observations of any child who seems unwell.

In the event of head lice infestation, a child must not return to Kindergarten until treatment is given and infestation has cleared. It is advisable to regularly check your child's hair for any evidence of infestation.

If you have any concerns or suggestions relating to any aspect of the Kindergarten, please discuss them in the first instance with the Supervisor or Chairperson and refer to our policy document for further information.

## EVENTS AND TRIPS

In addition to the everyday activities at the Kindergarten, we do have special events at Christmas, Easter, a Summer Sports Day and occasional excursions during the year.

Many of these occasions will provide the opportunity for parents and families to come along and join in the FUN!



## **SOME USEFUL TIPS**

Children should bring a coat everyday for outdoor play, a warm hat in cold weather and a sun hat in hot weather – we do try to go out everyday, weather permitting. Please bring wellies for the wet in a named cloth pump bag.

We do use aprons, but our craft activities are usually messy, so please send your child in clothes which ‘do not matter’ if they get paint or glue on them!

Please look on the hall notice board for the Home–School links which include topics, items of interest for the children to show at sharing time and ideas for activities at home.

For safety reasons, may we remind you that you are responsible for your child until they are settled into the play room under staff supervision and once you have collected them. Also, to prevent accidents or injuries when arriving/leaving the Kindergarten, please do not allow your child to use any play equipment, indoors or outdoors.

**Please** make sure the exit door is locked by a staff member when you leave and lock the gate on arrival & departure to ensure the safety of all the children.

The Kindergarten telephone number is (01260) 299076 to be used for information and important messages.

Finally, we do hope that your child will be very happy with us at Somerford Kindergarten.

Please do read our Policy Document (available in the Kindergarten or on our website) for further information.

## **SESSION TIMES**

### **FULL SCHOOL DAYS**

9.05am to 3.05pm

### **MORNINGS**

Monday to Friday  
9.05 am to 11.35 am

### **LUNCH CLUB**

11.35am to 12.35pm  
Parents provide packed Lunch

### **AFTERNOONS**

Monday to Friday  
12.35 pm to 3.05 pm

LUNCH CLUB can be added to either the Morning  
or Afternoon Session

Please contact the Registrar for further details and current fees.

